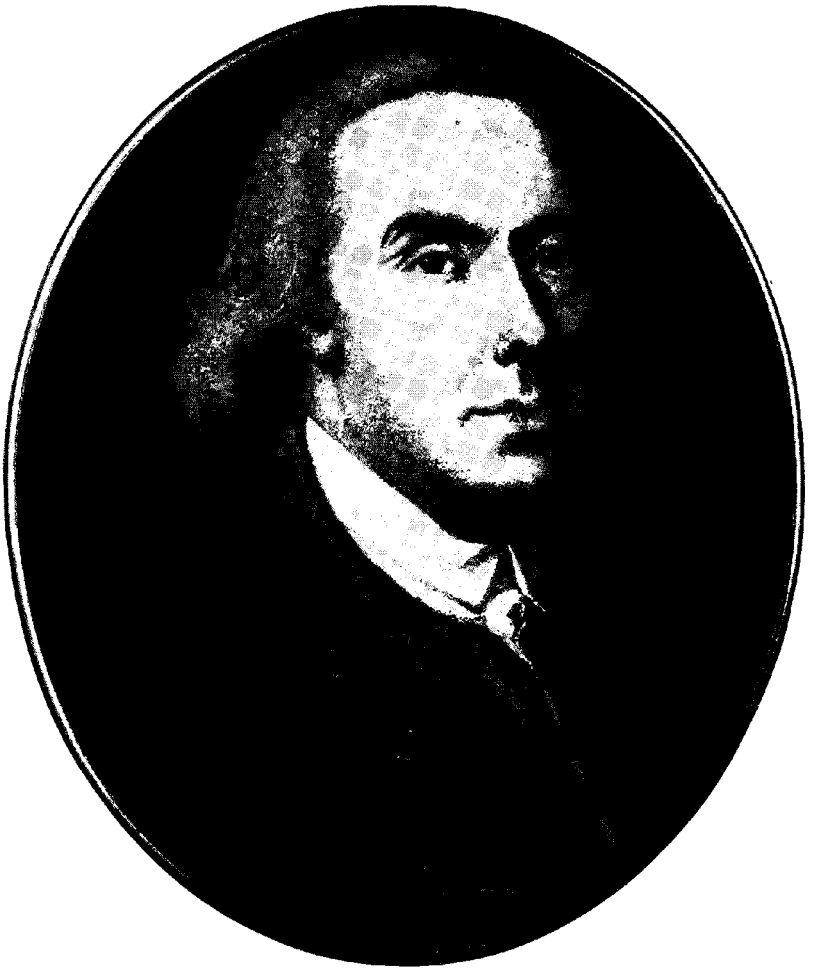
GENERAL GAGE IN AMERICA



GENERAL THOMAS GAGE, c. 1769

From a painting by John Singleton Copley in the Massachusetts State House.
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GENERAL GAGE IN AMERICA

Being Principally

A History of His Role in the American Revolution

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Preface

DESPITE the fact that there has been much scholarly delving into the American Revolution, General Thomas Gage, the commander in chief of the British army in North America from 1763 to 1775, the most powerful British official in America during the same period, and a central figure in the procession of events which led toward American independence, has attracted relatively little attention. Herein is presented with considerable modesty the first study of the general's career.

Probably the major reason for the lack of interest in Thomas Gage in the past was the fact that his official papers were long inaccessible. Indeed, they were not known to exist, so far as historians were concerned, until the twentieth century; and it was not until 1936 that they were made easily available to scholars in the Manuscript Division of the William L. Clements Library of the University of Michigan. A biographical study of the general could hardly have been written without this comprehensive body of Gage Manuscripts, although many important documents in the collection are also to be found in the British Public Record Office, the British Museum, and American repositories. The Gage Manuscripts, containing many thousands of documents, a large part of which are unobtainable elsewhere, have furnished the basic materials for this study. The bulk of the papers has been beautifully mounted and boxed. A small part

of the collection consists of letter books which have been preserved in their original state.

It is a regrettable fact that the Gage Manuscripts contain only a scrap or two of Gage's personal correspondence. The general did carry on a fairly extensive correspondence with relatives and friends in England during the period 1755–75. Unfortunately, diligent inquiry has brought to light only a few personal letters written by and to the general. The writer hopes that the appearance of this work will inspire the discovery of other correspondence of this nature still in existence. The author also regrets that, because of archival problems arising from World War II, a very few Gage documents in the British Museum have not been accessible, and will not be accessible for some time to come.

Because personal Gage documents in some quantity may sometime be found and because this study is the first of the general, it would be presumptuous to suggest that it is in any sense definitive. However, the writer believes that he has been able, from a variety of sources, to offer a reasonably accurate portrayal of Gage's character, personality, and career. Moreover, it is hoped that a fairly complete and relatively objective account of Gage's role in the American Revolution has been given. It will not surprise the reader that the major emphasis of this study is upon the part played by the general in the stirring scenes in America from the Peace of Paris in 1763 to his dismissal from the military command in the fall of 1775.

The writer must express first of all his gratitude to Dr. Randolph G. Adams, Librarian of the William L. Clements Library, and to Mr. Howard Peckham, formerly Curator of Manuscripts in the same institution. They suggested that this study be undertaken, and they gave assistance in innumerable ways. Other members of the staff of the same library were very helpful. To the present Viscount Gage, descendant of the general, the author is also heavily indebted. He graciously supplied copies of paintings and of documents, including family letters, in his possession at Firle in Sussex, the Gage seat. In addition he very kindly made inquiries regarding other source materials and did

his utmost to furnish answers to a host of questions which were inflicted upon him.

For special services and assistance the writer must also thank the Earl of Ilchester; Lord Rollo; Mr. Gustave Lanctot, Deputy Minister, Public Archives of Canada; Mr. G. H. Edgell, Director of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts; Governor Maurice Tobin of Massachusetts; Mr. Charles Holt, Sergeant at Arms of the Massachusetts legislature; Mr. Henry L. Shattuck of Boston; Mrs. Frederick Moseley of Boston; Miss Gertrude Hess of the American Philosophical Society; the staffs of the New York Historical Society, the New York Public Library, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, the British Public Record Office, the British Museum, the Archives of Eire, and the Royal Society; Dr. Paul Leedy, Librarian, Bowling Green State University; Dr. Kenneth McFall; and Dr. St. George L. Sioussat and Miss Grace G. Griffin of the Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress. The University of Nebraska assisted materially by granting a subsidy with which it became possible to purchase sorely needed documents and by furnishing secretarial aid.

Professors Lawrence Henry Gipson and W. C. Richardson, who read this study in manuscript, made many helpful suggestions. The author is also indebted to Mary Lamury Smith and Nancy Clegg Lytle of the Louisiana State University Press staff for their valuable editorial assistance. The writer's wife has helped in innumerable ways, as professors' wives so often do.

It would be well, perhaps, to indicate the "frame of reference" with which the author approaches General Gage. The author's views are definitely democratic rather than aristocratic, decidedly American rather than British. He has the deepest admiration for Jefferson, Franklin, and Washington, and believes that they and the Continental army fought for the nobler cause. Holding such opinions, he has, nevertheless, tried to be scrupulously fair in his estimate of the character and career of General Gage.

JOHN RICHARD ALDEN

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MARGARET KEMBLE GAGE, date uncertain. From a painting by David Martin in the possession of Viscount Gage at Firle. Reproduced by permission . . . . . *Facing page* 66

GENERAL THOMAS GAGE, c. 1769. From a painting by John Singleton Copley in the possession of Mrs. Frederick S. Moseley of Boston. Reproduced by permission . . . . . *Facing page* 160

BOSTON AND ENVIRONS, 1775. Prepared and drawn by Pearl Wells Alden . . . . . *Facing page* 254

GENERAL THOMAS GAGE, date uncertain. From a painting by Richard Wilson in the collection of Henry L. Shattuck of Boston. Reproduced by permission . . . . . *Facing page* 284

CHAPTER I

British Prelude

WHEN Lieutenant General Thomas Gage, commander in chief of the army of His Majesty George III in North America, departed in disgrace from Boston in October, 1775, after an unsuccessful defense of a conservative and unpopular cause, he could have consoled himself with the thought that he was merely carrying out the destiny of his race. His family, the Gages of Firle in Sussex, espoused the conservative and unpopular cause of Roman Catholicism in England for many generations after the church of that faith had become the "Scarlet Woman" to most Englishmen. The Gages somehow or other had consistently managed to support the losing side. They had given their hearts to King John, Bloody Queen Mary, Charles I, and James II. The general's ancestors had suffered again and again for their devotion, and he knew that he could expect only censure and disdain in return for his long service and his steadfast loyalty to Britain in the American crisis. As the ship which bore him carried him out from Boston into the rough waters of the north Atlantic he must have felt regret, apprehension, and relief: regret for twenty years of soldiering in America ending in miserable failure; apprehension of the cold stares and malicious smiles he would meet in England; and relief in leaving the cares and harassments of public life for the tender embraces of his wife and children in

England. There must have been consolation in the thought that the task of subduing the rebellious Americans, which he had handed on to others, was a difficult one. After all, it might be less vexing to endure the slights that Britain habitually reserved for her returning servants of empire than to lead the British troops who had the colossal job of restoring British power in America. In enduring those slights, deserved or undeserved, he would be in good company. England had not been too generous to the great John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, the nemesis of Louis XIV, nor to Robert Clive, the conqueror of Bengal; England had been especially unkind to Admiral Byng, who had been unsuccessful in defending Minorca in the last war with France and who had suffered execution for cowardice.

Gage is a very common name in Sussex. It is borne there by the high and the low, and it is also frequently found in the United States. Among the English Gages there have been several families of prominence, but none with so dignified a history as that of Firle, a country house pleasantly though not magnificently situated a few miles from Lewes. The earliest known progenitor of the Gages of Firle was a certain de Gaugi, a feudal noble of Rouen who came to England as one of the followers of William the Conqueror. One of his descendants was given lands in Wales and Gloucestershire by King Henry III in the thirteenth century. Later descendants resided in Cirencester for several generations, but removed to Surrey in 1440. Not many years afterward, Firle became the principal seat of the family. So *Burke's Peerage* describes the early history of the Gages of Firle, and we need not quarrel with that authority. However, Anthony Wood, a famous antiquarian of the seventeenth century, apparently throws some further light upon their background. At Cirencester in 1678, he noted in his journal, "The ancestour of the Gages in Sussex was a clothier of this town." [1] Sir John Gage, a great man in his day, great enough to be painted by Holbein, was the first man of

[1] Andrew Clark (ed.), *The Life and Times of Anthony Wood, Antiquary . . . , Publications of the Oxford Historical Society,* XXI (1892), 407.

prominence in the family of whom anything much is known. Sir John, victor over the Scots at Solway Moss, kept his head in more ways than one during the stormy days when the Reformation took root in England. He remained faithful to Roman Catholicism, yet managed to avoid persecution at the hands of ardent Protestants. As jailer of the Princess Elizabeth for a time, he was kind (according to Roman Catholic writers) and cruel (according to Protestant scribes); and he died quietly and decently in bed in 1556.

Most of Sir John's descendants at Firle ardently adhered to the old faith during 150 years and frequently suffered for it in those days when loyalty to Rome was considered by the majority of the English to be an admission of treason. The Gages of Firle were consistently able to avoid the scaffold, though, perhaps not without reason, they were commonly persons suspect. They furnished a president for the Jesuit College at Douai in France, a school where British gentlemen were educated and taught the precepts of the old church; and they supplied more than one agent for the papacy. At least one of these agents spent some time in the original Clink in London for his trouble. Thomas Gage, the Dominican monk who apostatized and furnished the major impulse for the English conquest of Jamaica through his famous book, *A New Survey of the West Indies,* was a member of the family. To most of the Gages, public careers were barred, and they did not prosper greatly, although they acquired a baronetcy in 1622. The fortunes of the family, although many interesting personalities sprang from it, did not resume great importance in England until its leaders forswore their ancient religion and became good and respectable members of the Established Church.

The first Gage of immediate interest to us was Joseph, fourth son of the fourth baronet, and grandfather of the general. Joseph, who once studied in the English College at Rome maintained for Roman Catholics, married Elizabeth Penruddock of Broadchalk in Wiltshire and settled down upon an estate at

Sherborne in Oxfordshire which had come into the Gage family through intermarriage with the Roman Catholic clan of Chamberlain at that place. They had four children. Joseph died young, and his widow was soon remarried, to Sir William Goring of Burton. She too died young, not long after her second marriage, and the children were placed under the guardianship of her second husband. Joseph's sons, Thomas and Joseph, were sent into France for their education, to La Flèche on the Loire, where they lived under the alias of Dunne (or Donne) in order to avert public notice of the fact that they were being reared in papism. By 1713 the older son, Thomas, had returned to England—he had gained at least a passable knowledge of French. Soon afterward he married Benedicta Maria Theresa, only daughter and heiress of Benedict and Jane Hall of Highmeadow in Gloucestershire. The Halls were also notable adherents to Rome. More important to Thomas, perhaps, was the fact that the Halls owned valuable properties in Gloucestershire and Monmouthshire which would probably come into his possession eventually.[2] The Highmeadow estate alone was valued at £2,500 per annum.

But let us leave Thomas Gage of Sherborne a moment for brief accounts of his younger brother and his two sisters. The youngest child, Anne, married Richard Bealing of Lanherne in Cornwall and quickly fades from our view. The older sister, Elizabeth, who married John Weston of Sutton in Surrey, quarreled with and separated from her husband. Her sorrows aroused the sympathy of her friend Alexander Pope, the great poet, who was apparently inspired to write his moving *Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady*. Joseph undoubtedly deserves more than a mere sketch. He spent his life in foreign lands, probably because of his religion. He made a tremendous

[2] *Oxfordshire Record Society, Parochial Collections* (Third Part) (Oxford, 1929), XI, 261, 262; *Publications of the Catholic Record Society*, VII (1909), 96, 107, 119; MS. power of attorney, July 11, 1757, signed by Thomas Gage, in General Thomas Gage MSS., William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan. These manuscripts are hereafter referred to as Gage MSS.

fortune in the Mississippi Bubble, became an intimate of Louis XV of France, tried to purchase the throne of the Kingdom of Poland, and offered to buy the island of Sardinia from the House of Savoy. Finally he lost his riches. Entering the service of Spain, Count de Gage, as he was later known, made for himself a new career, rendering great military services to the Spanish Bourbons in Italy in the War of the Austrian Succession. He ended a life of romance and achievement as a Spanish grandee at Paris in 1766.

A great turning point in the history of the Gages came in 1715 when the gloomy Roman Catholic son of James II, known as the Old Pretender, invaded Scotland and attempted to seize the throne made vacant by the death of his half sister Anne. Once again all papists in England were suspect. Sir William Gage, the seventh baronet, no doubt weary of the ostracism visited upon him, decided that he had no real faith in the saints and joined the Established Church. Of more importance to us was similar action on the part of his young kinsman and heir, Thomas of Sherborne.

If we may believe the poet Alexander Pope, who was well acquainted with the Gages, Thomas became an Anglican in 1715 in order to have the use of horses, forbidden to all those who refused to take an oath of allegiance to the Established Church. Thomas took the oath,[3] probably for more substantial reasons than the use of his horses. We may conclude that he was eager to escape all the discriminations placed upon Roman Catholics and that he hoped to obtain preferment as an Anglican. In 1717 he stood for election to the House of Commons in the borough of Minehead in Somersetshire. Since papists could not enter the Commons, it would appear that his apostasy did not arise from a trivial vexation. The Minehead election was hotly contested, even to the floor of the House, but he was unsuccessful. In 1721, however, he was chosen as a member for

[3] The Reverend Whitwell Elwin and William John Courthope (eds.), *The Works of Alexander Pope . . .*, 10 vols. (new edition; London, 1871–89), IX, 263.

Tewksbury in Gloucestershire. For almost forty years he was at least officially a Protestant.

With the stigma of popery removed, Thomas not only entered the Commons but also found favor at the court of George I. In 1720 he was created Viscount Gage of Castle Island and Baron Gage of Castlebar in the Irish peerage. He continued to represent Tewksbury, not too gloriously, if we may believe hostile critics, for thirty-three years. In that august body he was especially active in cases involving the estates of Roman Catholics forfeited to the crown, to his own benefit, but not to the comfort of his former fellow-religionists. He also busied himself in the conduct of public affairs in the infant colony of Georgia. In 1738 his appointment as governor of the tropical island of Barbados, a bastion of empire in the West Indies, was announced. The announcement, however, was premature. He did not get the plum. Perhaps government officials decided that he did not have the talents and character necessary for the post. More likely, he lacked the necessary friends; success in getting office in the old British empire was usually a matter of whom-do-you-know rather than what-do-you-know or what-can-you-do. The job eventually went to Sir Thomas Robinson, who won the favor of government by renting his London home to a powerful noble who wanted the house so badly he was glad to help its owner to the West Indies. Certainly Thomas Gage did not consistently cultivate the right people, for he gave his support for a long time to the wrong horse in politics, Frederick the Prince of Wales, heir apparent of George II, but also a bitter enemy of his father. The first viscount did not come to terms with that most potent politician and purveyor of public jobs, the Duke of Newcastle, until shortly before his own death in 1754.

The first viscount was hardly a bright star in the British political constellation of the first half of the eighteenth century. His private life was rather peculiar. Lord Hervey, who perhaps did not love him, described him as "a petulant, silly, busy, meddling,

profligate fellow." [4] He was by reputation neither modest nor continent. He was well known as a gambler, perhaps too well known, for the gossipy and malicious Horace Walpole testifies that no one would bet with him unless the stakes were in evidence. However, the first viscount was not quite an impossible person, since an acquaintance mentions him as "a cheerful old gentleman, tho' low." [5] He was a Fellow of the Royal Society as well as a member of White's gambling club and a devotee of literature as well as of the green tables. A curious incident which occurred in 1723 would appear to justify the adjective "silly" as applied to him. It seems that Lady Gage also had a reputation for inconstancy, for the Duke of Wharton, who expected never to be able to pay his debts, declared in a poem very popular in its time that he would pay them when "Lady Gage grows chaste." She went for a day's sailing trip with a small party on a yacht belonging to the Earl of Hillsborough, the most notorious rake of his generation. Presumably because of unfavorable winds, the yacht was unable to return to its home port in the evening, and Lady Gage sent a message to her husband at court to explain that she would not be able to return home until the next day. Lord Gage refused to believe that his wife was innocent of wrongdoing and actually displayed the letter to George I, demanding that the king do something about the situation. As a result, there was a public rupture and legal papers of separation drawn up.[6] However, this quarrel seems to have been eventually settled, since the couple were living together again in 1732 and later.[7]

Some accounts profess that the first viscount, though proud, was poor. Indeed, it may be true that he was sometimes finan-

[4] Romney Sedgwick (ed.), *Some Materials Towards Memoirs of the Reign of King George II By John, Lord Hervey,* 3 vols. (London, 1931), I, 265.

[5] Philip C. Yorke (ed.), *The Diary of John Baker* (London, 1931), 178.

[6] Lord Wharncliffe (ed.), *The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (With Additions and Corrections . . . by W. Moy Thomas),* 2 vols. (London, 1893), I, 469–70.

[7] *Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission, Report on the Manuscripts of the Late Reginald Rawdon Hastings, Esq. . . . ,* 3 vols. (1928–34), III, 9.

cially embarrassed in his early years. He sold Sherborne Castle in 1716. However, when Benedict Hall died in August, 1719, Highmeadow and other properties came into his hands through his wife. Moreover, upon the death of Sir William Gage, on April 23, 1744, he inherited the Firle estate. Probably he maintained his permanent residence at Highmeadow from 1719 to 1744, although he was certainly to be found in London "in the season." No doubt he usually resided at Firle after 1744.

It is not certain that the first viscount and his lady were ever on good terms after the bizarre episode described above. The viscountess died at Bristol in the summer of 1749 and was buried among her ancestors in the beautiful church at Newlands called "The Cathedral of the Forest of Dean," located near Highmeadow and not far from the precipitous banks of the river Wye. A special cross over her grave informed the initiated—not the heretic—that she had not abandoned her natal faith or had resumed it before her death.[8] The viscount was married again—promptly, in November, 1750—to the widow of Henry Jermyn Bond, also a Roman Catholic. He died at Firle on December 21, 1754, and was buried there with *his* ancestors. Before the end came he returned to the creed in which he was born. In the way of penance, in order to win absolution, he "had his head shaved, & lay 2 days & nights without a cap, & as oft as he was able, held a wax taper in his hand." [9] His second wife, who followed him in death in October, 1757, was buried with *her* forbears at Hengrave Church in Sussex.[10]

The first viscount and his first viscountess were the parents of three children, in order of birth, William Hall, Thomas, the general, and Theresa. Nothing very much can be learned regarding Theresa. According to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, there was gossip in 1742 that she would marry the Duke of

[8] *Publications of the Catholic Record Society,* XII (1913), 267.

[9] Albert Hartshome (ed.), *Memoirs of a Royal Chaplain, 1729–1763 The Correspondence of Edmund Pyle, D.D. Chaplain in Ordinary to George II . . .* (London and New York, 1905), 227–28.

[10] *Publications of the Catholic Record Society,* XXV (1925), 156.

Cleveland, who had recently become a widower. Actually she married in 1755 George Tasburgh of Bodney in Norfolk, a Roman Catholic of good family. It seems likely that she, like her mother and her husband, was a papist. She brought to him £20,000, and she died in 1775.[11]

William Hall Gage, born on New Year's Day, 1718, of course inherited the family titles and most of the family property upon the death of his father. He had entered public life in 1744 as member of the House of Commons for Seaford, a rotten borough in Sussex which had only about forty voters and which returned two members, one of whom was not infrequently a Gage of Firle, when a member of that family was available. William represented Seaford from 1744 to 1747 and from 1755 to 1780, resigning his seat eventually because of his elevation to the British peerage. After inheriting the family titles he served as Paymaster of the Pensions for a considerable period and also, apparently for a very short time, as undersecretary of state for the colonies under Lord George Germain during the American War of Independence. In spite of his father's politics, he attached himself as a young man to the Duke of Newcastle. As an adherent of the duke, and subsequently as the possessor of great wealth, he was not without influence at court. He married, in February of 1757, Elizabeth Gideon, who brought to him £40,000 as a dowry and five years later other sums which increased his income to £12,000 per annum—and thereby hangs a tale.

One of the Portuguese Jews who migrated to England at the close of the seventeenth century was Rowland Gideon, who reached London by way of Boston, Massachusetts. Of humble origin, he had a most remarkable son, Sampson Gideon, a financial genius of the first magnitude. Sampson made a comfortable fortune in the South Sea Bubble, kept it in the crash which followed, added steadily to it, and was worth £580,000 at his death in 1762. To assist his good friend the Duke of Devonshire,

[11] *Ibid.*, VII (1909), 200, 203; *Gentleman's Magazine,* XXV (1755), 138.

he helped to float public loans without which the great British victories of the Seven Years' War might have been impossible. Gideon was an astonishing person, shrewd, liberal, courageous, gifted with a sense of humor, and just a little eccentric. Like most wealthy Hebrews in England he was eager to enter the nobility, but it was impossible for him to do so because he could not bring himself to join the Established Church. He did the next best thing. He married an Englishwoman and fathered three children whom he brought up in the Anglican faith. A son, Sampson, Jr., was sent to Eton and was presented with a baronetcy by his father and a grateful government at the ripe age of thirteen in 1759.[12]

Later Sampson, Jr., married a daughter of Chief Justice Sir John Eardley Wilmot, took his wife's name, and became Lord Eardley in the Irish peerage. One of his sisters died unmarried, but a younger one, Elizabeth, caught the attention of the second Viscount Gage. Elizabeth Gideon was something of a beauty and a very attractive person; and if William Hall Gage was not averse to her money, he was apparently really very much in love with her—at least he told his brother, with whom he shared most of his secrets, that he was. It was an ideal match, although their seven children all died in infancy, an uncommon tragedy even in eighteenth-century England.

The second viscount, like his father, was a member of White's. He was also a member of a famous club which met at Tom's Coffee House in Russell Street in London, in which a host of notables of his time spent idle hours. He was fond of fishing, swimming, and horse racing, and was noted for his generous hospitality. No rake, he was a stout Protestant and was at least conventionally devout in his allegiance to the Anglican Church, for services were held every Sunday evening at Firle.[13] He was

[12] For a biting comment on the father by Horace Walpole see Mrs. Paget Toynbee (ed.), *The Letters of Horace Walpole . . .*, 19 vols. (Oxford, 1903–25), V, 269–70.

[13] Various references to him are to be found in Peter O. Hutchinson (ed.), *The Diary and Letters of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson . . .*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1884–86), *passim.*

hopelessly absent-minded and was consequently often caught in embarrassing situations, much to the mirth of his friends.[14] Perhaps the most interesting side of his personality was his exceeding fondness for his brother, a sentiment which was returned in full measure. Probably this attachment grew from neglect of the brothers by the father. According to Horace Walpole, the first viscount once boasted that he intended to bring his oldest son into Parliament and that he would not influence him, but leave him entirely to himself. "D—— it," responded Winnington, a great wit, "so you have all his life time." [15]

Thomas Gage, the younger son and the central figure in these pages, was born in 1719 or early in 1720. Where he was born is not known. It is certain that he spent much of his early boyhood at Highmeadow,[16] located in one of the most beautiful spots in all England. In later years he was to return there for many a visit. The house is now, alas, gone. It commanded on the south a glorious view of the church of Staunton rising above thousands of acres of woodlands. In 1728 Tom and his older brother were sent away to school, but not to one of the Roman Catholic institutions in which their ancestors had been instructed. They were admitted to the famous Westminster public school in January of that year. The record of Tom's admission, the only contemporary evidence discovered regarding his age, states that he was at that time eight years old.[17] The brothers remained at Westminster for several years, William Hall leaving in 1735 and Tom in 1736.[18] The eight years Tom spent at

[14] See an interesting characterization of Lord Cage in [Sir Herbert Croft], *The Abbey of Kilkhampton; or, Monumental Records for the Year 1780* . . . (London, 1780), 8–9. Croft predicted Lord Cage would die as a result of riding into his own carriage in a fit of absent-mindedness.

[15] Toynbee (ed.), *The Letters of Horace Walpole*, I, 151.

[16] Frederick Haldimand to Gage, March 2, 1774, Haldimand Papers, Archives of Canada.

[17] G. F. R. Baker and A. H. Stenning (eds.), *The Record of Old Westminsters*, 2 vols. (London, 1928), I, 360. Gage's birth date in standard reference works is usually given as 1720 or 1721. However, no contemporary evidence has been offered in these to substantiate either of the dates. Since he had not passed his ninth birthday in January, 1728, he was born in 1719 or early in 1720.

[18] *Ibid.*

Westminster were undoubtedly important ones. His formal schooling in very large part was obtained there. Moreover, it is very likely that he formed friendships and acquaintances which were of the greatest importance in later life. Among friends who afterward helped him and who were fellow students at Westminster were George Keppel, third Earl of Albemarle, and his brother Augustus, the famous admiral; Welbore Ellis, afterward secretary at war in a position to assist Gage at one of the most critical points in his career, and much later Lord Mendip; and Simon, first Earl of Harcourt, who eventually rose to high rank in the British army. Other fellow scholars in Gage's time who were closely connected with him in after years, although in some cases by no means as friends, were Francis Bernard, subsequently governor of Massachusetts; John Burgoyne, Gage's junior officer at Bunker Hill and the loser at Saratoga; George Augustus, third Viscount Howe; Admiral Lord Richard Howe; and Lord George Germain. General Robert Monckton and the Earl of Dartmouth, later colonial secretary, were Westminsters of a slightly younger vintage than Gage. That Gage valued Westminster is clear: all his four sons were afterward sent to his own school. That his own education was not neglected is almost equally clear. In maturity he displayed acquaintance with Latin and English literature and also a very substantial knowledge of French, the latter probably not acquired at Westminster. It is likely that he became a firm Anglican during those days, for Tom, like his older brother, was apparently never a Roman Catholic. Indeed, in maturity he exhibited a passionate dislike for the Church of Rome.

Only a flight of fancy would permit one to describe Thomas Gage as an intellectual, although he later displayed a fondness for liberal education and sent his oldest son to the University of Göttingen and to Berlin to study the arts and sciences.[19] It is

[19] Gage to Haldimand, Aug. 28, 1777, Haldimand Papers, Archives of Canada; Gage to Henry Gage, Feb. 10, 1778, May 21, 1779, Gage—Firle MSS. The letters from Gage to his son cited here are in the possession of the present Viscount Gage. Lord Gage has very graciously supplied me with

extremely unlikely that he himself had any university training,[20] although he may have continued his studies for a short time after leaving Westminster. He may also have taken the "Grand Tour" so commonly made by the young Englishmen of his time. However, he had definitely entered upon his career by 1740. As a younger son without great independent means he was almost forced to choose a profession in which he might make a livelihood. For him the church, the bar, statecraft, the army, and the navy were the only choices possible. It is not likely that he was long undecided, for he was a born soldier—though not necessarily a born general. Exactly when he entered the British army is not known, but his first commission as ensign must have been inscribed some time between 1736 and 1740. That commission and his first promotions were apparently obtained through the favor of the Duke of Newcastle, with whom his older brother was very friendly.[21] One of his first duties, and a very pleasing one, was to carry on recruiting in Yorkshire, where he formed a friendship with the family of the Duke of Cleveland and with Sir Ralph Milbanke, grandfather of the young lady who married Lord Byron the poet.[22]

In January, 1741, Gage purchased a commission as lieutenant in a regiment under Colonel Cholmondeley, recently known as the First Northampton. He transferred to Battereau's foot, an Irish corps of two battalions, in May, 1742, obtaining the rank of captain-lieutenant. He was given his captaincy in January, 1743. He accompanied the British troops which were sent to Flanders after the outbreak of the war with France in 1744 to oppose the French army there under the famous Maurice de Saxe. As aide-de-camp to the second Duke of Albemarle, father of his school friends the Keppels, he took part in the bloody

copies of these, of several other valuable documents at Firle, and of the general's will, which is preserved at Somerset House.

[20] No record of his matriculation at any British university has been found.

[21] William Hall Gage to the Duke of Newcastle, April 7, 1742, Newcastle Papers, in British Museum, Additional MSS. (hereafter referred to as Add. MSS.).

[22] Gage to Henry Gage, Sept. 13, 1782, Gage—Firle MSS.

battle of Fontenoy in 1745. Later in the same year his regiment was sent against Bonnie Prince Charlie to deal with the forces which that gay young Stuart had gathered about him in a desperate attempt to regain the British crown. As aide-de-camp again to the Duke of Albemarle, Gage served under the Duke of Cumberland and General Henry Hawley in the campaigns which ruined the dreams of the Young Pretender, and he participated in the rout of the Scottish clansmen on Culloden Moor. He again took the field under Albemarle in the campaigns of 1747 and 1748 in the Low Countries.

Before Battereau's foot was mustered out in 1748 because of the signing of the Peace of Aachen, Gage transferred to the fifty-fifth regiment under Colonel John Lee and purchased his majority. He was an officer in this regiment, renumbered the forty-fourth soon afterward, for almost ten years. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel on March 2, 1751. From 1748 to 1755 his regiment was quartered in Ireland.[23]

Of course Thomas Gage as a younger officer did not spend all his time on the battlefield or in the camp. There were trips to Tunbridge Wells, an appearance or two at court, at least one journey to Paris, good dinners at Dublin, and a little gambling at White's, for, like his father and brother, Gage was a member of this famous club. There was much camaraderie with his fellow officers, for "Honest Tom" Gage, until he reached the top of the ladder, was a popular man in the army. Like his brother, he was no rake. He was fond neither of liquor nor of gambling in excess.[24] Gallant, dignified, and courteous, he made friends with the high and the low, with the talented and the stupid, with

[23] The writer found three references in Gage's official correspondence to his early career. In one of them Eyre Massey refers to himself and Gage as "old Cullodeners"; in the others Gage mentions his service in the Low Countries and in Scotland. The sketch of the general in the *Dictionary of National Biography* and citations given therein furnished most of the facts given here regarding his military adventures between 1742 and 1755. See also William M. Sumner, *A History of East Boston . . .* (Boston, 1858), 361.

[24] Gage wrote to his son Henry in 1782: "By yours of the 3rd inst. I find your long expected [military] Review was over, so that Field Days, paradings etc. will be less frequent, and you will have more time to amuse yourself. The acct. of your Review Dinner is such as generally happens when large societies assemble on any acct. and swallow large draughts of the juice of

the selfish and the generous. Charles Lee, son of Gage's colonel and later major general in the American Continental armies, but for several years a junior officer under Gage in the forty-fourth, swore undying affection. In 1774 Lee was to write to Gage: "I have had a real affection for very few men—but that these few, I have lov'd with warmth zeal ardor. You, sir, amongst these few, I swear, by all that's sacred, have ever held one of the foremost places. I respected your understanding, lik'd your manners and perfectly ador'd the qualities of your heart." [25] For many years the admiration Lee gave so unstintingly to his senior officer was the talk of the British army. Gage, however, correctly assessed Lee's tempestuous character and was not surprised when Lee turned like a tiger against him at the beginning of the War of Independence. More gratifying to Gage, we can be sure, was the sincere friendship of the brilliant James Wolfe, who had served with him in Scotland under Hawley.[26] Long after the brave Wolfe had shed his lifeblood on the Plains of Abraham the surest route for an officer to Gage's good opinion was proof that the officer had won Wolfe's approbation.

More gratifying also was the affection of others who became more or less intimate with Gage in his early maturity. Among these were William Wildman, Viscount Barrington, a politician who managed to stay near the top of the heap for many years, twice serving as secretary at war; Wills Hill, second Earl of Hillsborough and son of the gentleman whose yachting party had so dismayed Gage's father, later president of the Board of Trade and still later secretary of state for the colonies; the Duke of Cumberland and the Marquis of Granby, both of whom were

the grape. People are then more unguarded in speech and behaviour, many apt to be captious and hot, old animosities and jealousies revive, so few who can then bear contradiction, and people so frequently say and do things they blush at when sober, that I have ever avoided as much as possible all clubs and meetings where much drinking was expected, and not naturaly loving too much liquor, I generally contrived to keep tolerably sober when I was there." Gage to Henry Gage, Sept. 13, 1782, Gage—Firle MSS.

[25] The Lee Papers, *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1871* (New York, 1872), 133–34.

[26] Robert Wright, *The Life of Major-General James Wolfe Founded on Original Documents* . . . (London, 1864), 256, 293.

to command the British army; Sir Joseph Yorke, subsequently ambassador to Holland; and Jeffrey Amherst, a rising man in the army. Associations like these would be very useful in the future.

As a young man of the world Gage was extremely popular with the ladies as well as with the men. Slender and moderately tall, with regular features, large eyes, and a long, aristocratic nose, he must have been very handsome in his youth. He was exceedingly well liked by the females, whether in Ireland, France, or England, and apparently was a principal in many affairs of the heart. He had "several amours . . . with the demireps of the *ton* in Dublin," and another with a widow in Paris after the close of the War of the Austrian Succession in 1748. However, his moral standards, his milieu taken into consideration, were by no means low. Unlike many of his class and time, he conscientiously avoided intrigues with married ladies, although he often received overtures from them in Paris, and despite the fact that he was frequently teased by his friends because of his squeamishness. Nor would he take unfair advantage of the unmarried members of the fair sex. Eventually, about 1750, he won the heart of an English "lady of rank and fortune, whom he persuaded to yield her hand in an honourable way, and they, for a considerable time, enjoyed all the felicities that mutual love and affection could confer, without alloy; but this happiness proved too great to be permanent, and the inexorable tyrant snatched his enchanting mate from him, and left him inconsolable." This alliance, which ended so tragically for Gage, may have been legally contracted. However, no record of such a marriage nor even the slightest reference to one has been found.[27]

If Gage was prostrated by the unhappy ending of this love

[27] The data and quotations given above regarding Gage's amours as a young man are to be found in "Histories of the Téte-à-Téte annexed; or, Manners of the Lenient Commander and Mrs. F——G," *Town and Country Magazine*, XIII (1781), 233–36. The "Lenient Commander," of course, was Gage. This magazine sketch is one of a series of exposés regarding prominent persons in *Town and Country*. The sketch seems quite reliable. The writer (or writers) was apparently not hostile to Gage. He was seeking to amuse rather than to injure, and his estimate of Gage is favorable rather than otherwise.

match, a venture which he made into politics did not bring him great joy. In the eighteenth century, military and naval officers frequently sat in the House of Commons. Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Gage and Thomas Gage, M.P., could help each other. In 1753, as a general election approached, Viscount Gage, perhaps more solicitous about the future of his children than would appear from Winnington's witticism, announced himself as a candidate for re-election in Tewksbury and sponsored Tom for a second seat in the borough. However, both father and son fared rather badly, in spite of the fact that the father had then represented Tewksbury for over three decades. Since the roads in the borough were in very bad shape, a movement was on foot to improve them at public expense. Certain wealthy persons who feared they would be heavily assessed had a bright idea: Why not compel the successful candidates to pay £1,500 each toward building the new roads? Viscount Gage absolutely refused to listen to this proposal, but offered to give £200 per annum for the purpose whether he was elected or not—provided the scheme were set aside! His suggestion met with a scornful refusal. Eventually the schemers found suitable candidates in John Martin and Nicholson Calvert, rich London merchants. These gentlemen made it clear that they would furnish the necessary bribe and were triumphantly elected, in April, 1754. In November of the same year the Gages petitioned the House of Commons to recognize them as the legally chosen members. Not long afterward, however, the viscount died, and Thomas did not feel that he could afford to continue the contest.[28] In January, 1755, he was permitted to withdraw his petition. In any case, a seat would have been of doubtful value at the time, for Gage and his regiment were ordered to America in the fall of 1754, and he was not to return to England for over eighteen years. The French and British had resumed shooting at each other in the interior of America, and the forty-fourth was to help see to it that justice was done *à l'anglaise*.

[28] J. L., "Tewksbury Politics in 1753," *Gloucestershire Notes and Queries*, N S., V (1893), 509–11; *Journals of the House of Commons, 1754–1757*, 22–23.

Embarkation day at Cork must have been a sad one for Gage. In addition to the recent loss of his mysterious beloved, the death of his father, and his failure at Tewksbury, his health was so poor that Wolfe feared he would not survive the expedition to America.[29] But it was also a favorable turning point in his career, since America brought to him opportunities and rewards which he might never have secured at home or on the battlefields of Germany. Of course, Gage could hardly have foreseen that he would eventually become the most powerful representative of Britain in North America, nor could he have foreseen that he would live to observe a new nation arising on the western shores of the Atlantic.

[29] Wright, *The Life of Major-General James Wolfe,* 293.

CHAPTER II

Disaster in the Wilderness

WHILE Thomas Gage was enjoying the pleasant semi-idleness of the English military officer in time of peace, events in the American wilderness were leading toward another mighty conflict between the great powers of Europe, a conflict which was to rage on four continents and was to involve dozens of highnesses and their peoples. The Peace of Aachen, which had brought the War of the Austrian Succession to a close, had not extinguished the enmities and rivalries which had caused that war. British cabinets continued to look upon France as a mortal enemy; and the proud and determined Habsburg queen, Maria Theresa of Austria, never ceased to dream of the day when she could crush Frederick the Great of Prussia and avenge the rape of the fertile province of Silesia. The years 1748–54 were years of truce rather than of peace; a renewal of bloodshed, as it seems now, was almost inevitable; and neither rulers nor statesmen thought it their duty to avert a new holocaust. The worldly wise among the most high, especially Maria Theresa and Frederick, prepared for a death struggle by training armies and seeking allies. And eventually Britain found herself in alliance with little Hanover and Frederick against the resources of the Habsburgs, France, Russia, Sweden, and a host of smaller states. The fighting did not begin in Europe until the spring of 1756, and Spain did

not enter the war until 1762, but hostilities between Britain and France began early in 1754 on the banks of the Ohio and spread to the high seas in the following year. It was a novel war for Europeans in that it began in far-off America. It was called the French and Indian War in America. Historians in England and France later designated it as the Seven Years' War, although it continued from 1754 to 1763, because declarations of intentions to commit indignities upon each other were not exchanged by the two countries until May, 1756.

Why did the struggle begin in America? Peace of Aachen or no, the French leaders at Versailles and in America were determined to prevent the British settlers in the Old Thirteen Colonies and Nova Scotia from advancing into the interior of the continent; and they stirred up against them the Indians on the borders of New England, New York, and the southern British colonies. Even more important, they sent French regulars from Lake Ontario and Lake Erie across canoe portages to erect a chain of forts from Presqu' Isle to the junction of the Monongahela and the Allegheny rivers. They intended to use those forts and the Indians in their neighborhood to gain the Ohio Valley for France. No doubt the French leaders believed that the banks of "the Beautiful River" were theirs by right, but Lieutenant Governor Robert Dinwiddie, who represented the British crown in Virginia, had different ideas. There was among British officials, both in London and in America, an influential school of politicians disposed to assert decisively the claims of England to lands far beyond the heights of the Alleghenies; and the Scotsman Dinwiddie was perhaps the most energetic person in the group. He favored the expansion of Virginia deep into the heart of the continent; and his powers as executive in the Old Dominion enabled him to translate his thoughts into action, though not very effectively. Dinwiddie, stimulated by Virginians interested in land speculation, was just as anxious to occupy the forks of the Ohio as were his French antagonists. Had he been able to secure funds without delay, the British would have forti-

fied and garrisoned that vital spot before the French could act, but the Virginia burgesses were slow in voting money to support his projects, and neighboring colonies exhibited a great lack of interest in the situation. When, early in 1754, a small gang of Virginia workmen began to erect a stockade at the forks, a considerable force of French regulars promptly appeared from the surrounding woods. There was nothing for the Virginians to do but accept a polite demand to surrender and get out, and they did it. As yet there was no shooting, and the French proceeded rapidly to erect Fort Duquesne on the coveted site. Not long after the French occupation of the forks, George Washington, commanding a body of ill-disciplined troops and acting under the direction of Dinwiddie, advanced through the woods toward Duquesne. Parties of French soldiers met him on the eastern approaches to the fort, there was shooting and death, and Washington was forced to surrender his Fort Necessity and to return to the Virginia settlements, leaving the French in full possession.

When the news of the gunfire on the Monongahela and a plea for help from Virginia reached London in September, the sluggish British lion began slowly to stir. The cabinet called in Major General Edward Braddock, a brave, obstinate, and experienced officer, and gave him a commission as commander in chief of the British forces, whether regulars or provincials, in America. The ministers of state furnished him two regiments, a naval escort, authority to make necessary expenditures and to raise additional troops in America, and told him to capture Fort Duquesne and prevent French aggression elsewhere on the frontiers of the British colonies. He was also instructed to tender a commission as agent for the British crown to the powerful Iroquois Indians to William Johnson, elegant squaw man and potent figure in the Mohawk Valley. If there should be a serious conflict in America, the friendship of the Iroquois would be badly needed; and Johnson was perhaps the only man who could make sure of the good behavior of the fickle red men. It was obvious

that the cabinet hoped to strike a hard blow at the French, but that it had no design to cut at the roots of the French power in America, much less to make certain a conflict in Europe.

The hubbub in Ireland when orders came from Braddock to the forty-fourth and forty-eighth regiments to prepare to embark at Cork for Virginia may be imagined. Finally all was ready, and shortly after New Year's Day, 1755, Gage's friend Commodore Keppel, who commanded the protecting warships, led the transports out to sea. By the middle of March the troops had all arrived in Virginia. There everything was in confusion, for specific plans for the campaign were incomplete although Governor Horatio Sharpe of Maryland had made some progress in drilling provincial troops. In April various colonial governors and officials conferred with Braddock at Alexandria. Braddock himself undertook to capture Fort Duquesne, then, if possible, to move northward toward Lake Erie; Governor William Shirley of Massachusetts, second in rank, was to lead an expedition against the French post of Niagara; William Johnson was to conciliate the Iroquois and to attack a French fort at Crown Point; Lieutenant Colonel Robert Monckton was ordered to assail French outposts on the neck between Nova Scotia and the mainland. Gage, of course, had no large share in making these arrangements. However, he took part in the various social functions which accompanied the conference. He met many prominent persons there, and made an excellent impression on his new acquaintances, including Daniel Dulany of Maryland, who found Gage to be a man of "prudence and humanity." [1]

The Alexandria program, with its psychology of aggressive defense, which seemed reasonable enough on paper, proved almost impossible in action. The limited objective assigned to Monckton was gained; Johnson, or at least Johnson's force, won a bloody battle on the shores of Lake George, but failed to make any use of it; Shirley, finally reaching an English post at Oswego in late

[1] *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, III (1879), 14.

summer, found it impossible to proceed to Niagara; and poor Braddock encountered disaster and death in the woods east of Fort Duquesne. With him went Gage.

Braddock had at his disposal about 2,500 men, the two regiments of regulars and some provincials, when he began his slow march from Alexandria toward Duquesne. He did not reach Little Meadows, some twenty-three miles beyond Fort Cumberland, Maryland, until June 18. It was there that the difficulties of the task before him became evident to all. Spoiled and inadequate provisions, administrative confusion, and the rough country ahead presented heavy problems, even before meeting an enemy of unknown strength. There were also quarrels between the regulars and the provincials, and between cliques among the regular officers. Gage was apparently not deeply involved in these controversies, but it can be assumed that he sometimes wished himself back in England, especially since he learned while on the march that the Duke of Newcastle had made him a present of John Mitchell's new map of North America and had promised him a seat in Parliament as soon as he should return from the campaign.[2] The map would be of little use, but the seat in the Commons was a different matter.

Fortunately, Benjamin Franklin had largely solved Braddock's transportation problem by procuring, through effective advertising, horses and wagons from Pennsylvania farmers. Braddock further increased the mobility of his force by leaving over 1,100 of his less trusted men at Little Meadows under Colonel Thomas Dunbar of the forty-eighth. With between 1,300 and 1,400 troops, the major portion of whom were taken from the more experienced regulars of the Irish regiments, he moved on toward his goal. Progress was still rather slow, but the army crossed the Monongahela above Fort Duquesne on June 8, without molestation, although a French ambush at the river had been much feared. There was indeed good reason to fear an ambush at the

[2] Gage to Newcastle, July 24, 1755, Add. MSS., 32,857, folios 342–43.

fording place, for Contrecoeur, the French commander at Duquesne, had decided to attempt a surprise attack rather than to suffer almost certain capture in the fort. He sent out a body of about nine hundred men, including both French and Indians. However, although an attack at the fording place was contemplated, it was decided instead to wait for a better opportunity. With a small force Gage, apparently under orders from Braddock, had occupied a hill near the ford, thus protecting the passage of the main body. Even before the army had crossed the river Gage sent a message to Braddock to report that there were unquestionable signs of the recent presence of a large enemy force at the river, and to ask for orders. He received no reply until the main body had completed its crossing. Then Braddock sent instructions to place his men at the head of the army and to proceed in column. It would appear that Braddock, perhaps believing that the danger of ambush was largely over, decided that precautions such as he had taken in crossing the river were no longer necessary.[3]

At three o'clock, long before dawn on July 9, the march was continued. That morning Gage pushed ahead with the guides and the advance guard of three hundred regulars; behind him came at some distance a road-making party of two hundred men; then followed the main body, marching on both sides of the wagons and cattle; a rear guard of one hundred Virginians was immediately behind the main body. The advance guard was itself divided into three parts, in order: the guides, a company of grenadiers, and a reserve. All went well until about noon, when the guides, moving slowly up a gradual incline through fairly open-wooded country, were suddenly fired upon by French and Indians directly in their front. The attack was not a complete surprise, but the gods rewarded the temerity of the French and Indians. The guides, perhaps not sufficiently far forward, fell

[3] The statements made in regard to Braddock's instructions to Gage are based upon Daniel Dulany's account of the events of July 8–9. See *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, III (1879), 17–18. Dulany's account seems reliable.

back upon the main part of the advance guard and the reserve without much warning. Gage halted his men, formed them, and ordered them to fire on the fleeting forms dimly seen in the woods. Then, as the foe advanced and soldiers slumped to the ground under his withering fire, Gage fell back against the working party, re-formed, and fired again. Meanwhile, the enemy pushed ahead upon Gage's left and also to a hill on his right. A frontal attack by Gage might have broken up these flanking movements, but he either could not or would not attempt one. Probably he could not. While the French and Indians made their way along the sides of the British column, the main body of the British troops hurriedly pressed forward. Impeded by the wagons and cattle and hampered by lack of space, the men in the main body were in confusion before they came under fire from three sides. Soon the entire British army was in disorder. The men stood bravely, dying at the hands of enemies they could not see, sometimes dying even at the hands of their own comrades. Gage and Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Burton of the forty-eighth strove gallantly to organize parties to advance into the woods to drive off the enemy, but the men refused to obey their commands. Finally, after more than two hours of frightful slaughter, the troops could stand no longer and began to retreat, in spite of the frenzied efforts of the officers to maintain their ranks. Colonel Peter Halkett of the forty-fourth and many other officers were killed. Braddock, mortally wounded, though he lived four days longer, was hurried away. Through Washington, who had joined the army as a volunteer upon the staff and who bore a charmed life in the midst of the carnage, he tried to direct the retreat and to save as much of the army as possible. There was little Washington could do, but Gage managed to keep eighty regulars in some kind of order and organized a slight cover for the flight of the remains of the army across the Monongahela and back to Little Meadows. Fortunately for the English, the French and Indians did not attempt to exploit their victory, and Gage's extemporized rear guard was not attacked.

At Little Meadows, Colonel Dunbar, who succeeded to the command of the army, still had at his disposal a considerable body of men. He might at least have maintained a defensive position at that place. Indeed, he might have resumed the march against Fort Duquesne. Instead he permitted a general retreat to Fort Cumberland. In fact the major part of the army fell back through Shippensburg and Lancaster to Philadelphia, where it was bivouacked early in September. Finally orders of August 12 reached Dunbar from Shirley, who had inherited the powers of the commander in chief, to make a second attempt, if possible, upon Fort Duquesne. Dunbar, after holding a council of war, informed Shirley that the loss of the artillery on the Monongahela, the refusal of the Quakers to permit the raising of troops in Pennsylvania, and the lateness of the season would bring inevitable failure. Gage participated in making this decision, hardly open to question. Shirley then ordered Dunbar's force into winter quarters at Albany. Dunbar was unable to secure wagons quickly at Philadelphia. Finally, however, by way of Brunswick and New York, he reached Albany late in October, where the forty-fourth settled down for the winter. Meanwhile Gage had restored order and discipline in the regiment.

The disastrous campaign of 1755 in the West aroused recriminations among the officers and men who survived it, as well as great dissatisfaction in official and private circles. Inevitably there were attempts to find a culprit or culprits, attempts which have continued until the present day. Braddock was an obvious target. He has been censured, probably unjustly, for failing to employ Indian auxiliaries; for omitting proper precautions against surprise; for trying to use traditional and unwieldy formations in the wilderness; and for not safeguarding his line of communications. The most recent indictment against him is that the organization of his troops on the fatal day was faulty even according to the European practices of his time.[4] Captain Robert

[4] Stanley M. Pargellis, "Braddock's Defeat," *American Historical Review,* XLI (1936), 253–69.

Orme, Braddock's aide-de-camp, who had had perhaps too much to do with the management of the campaign, tried to lay the blame for the disaster of July 9 upon Gage and the advance guard, declaring in accounts circulated shortly after the battle that the advance guard, by falling back in great confusion, had disorganized the main body coming to the rescue. Gage and his subordinates publicly denied the accusation in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of September 4. The charge was apparently without substantial basis in fact.

Possibly the arrangement of the advance guard on the fatal day was not the best that might have been made. If it was faulty, however, the blame should probably be placed upon Braddock and Orme, since the arrangement, as noted above, was seemingly made under instructions. It is likely that the disaster could have been prevented by placing a part of the advance guard upon the hill on the right of the line of march to protect the passage of the main body. It is not at all certain that Gage can be censured for not taking this step, contrary to, or even in the absence of, instructions.[5] Certainly Gage exhibited great gallantry in meeting the attack and rendered a conspicuous service in covering the retreat. With his fellow officers and men falling all about him under the fire of an invisible foe—Gage actually saw only one enemy during the whole conflict—he stubbornly continued to carry on the unequal struggle until the French and Indians ceased their pursuit. He was extremely lucky to come out of the slaughter with his life. In a postscript to a letter which he wrote to his friend the Earl of Albemarle—it was typical of him that he described his own peril in a postscript—he declared: "I es-

[5] The most recent description of the Braddock campaign is to be found in Lawrence Henry Gipson, *The Great War for the Empire: The Years of Defeat, 1754–1757* (New York, 1946), which is the sixth volume of the author's history of *The British Empire before the American Revolution*. In Chapter IV Professor Gipson analyzes anew the evidence on the British defeat. He places more reliance upon statements by Orme than do most writers. His account would suggest that Gage had large discretionary powers as leader of the advance guard and that Gage might have displayed greater initiative on July 9. It is at least doubtful that he had such powers. See note 3 of this chapter.

caped very narrowly my self. I received a slight wound in my belly, which is almost well, a graze of a slugg on my eye brow, some shots in my coat, and my horse twice wounded. Poor Nartlo was killed."

Willing to endure the hardships and to risk the dangers of military life, Gage had the quite human desire for preferment. From Fort Cumberland on July 24 he wrote to the Duke of Newcastle, thanking him for past favors and soliciting the colonelcy of the forty-fourth, vacated by Halkett's death. He declared that only Braddock's untimely decease had prevented the general from executing a promise of promotion in the field, and that Braddock had intended to give a step up to each officer in the regiment. Gage urged that the officers in the field be preferred, even when lacking the seniority of others not engaged in the campaign. He hinted at the unfair charge placed against his own conduct by Orme. If he were not given the colonelcy, he feared the affair would "throw an imputation upon him, which he must ever after labour under. . . ." At the same time Gage also sought to bring pressure upon the Duke of Cumberland, then virtually commander in chief of the British armed forces, through his schoolmate the third Earl of Albemarle. Lord Gage exerted influence in his brother's behalf with both Newcastle and Cumberland. "You know how much I love my brother," the viscount wrote to the former.[6] In a news letter from Annapolis in December Daniel Dulany, later a famous pamphleteer, also defended Gage and urged his promotion.[7] But it was in vain. In the following January there were rumors in the army that Gage had won his point, which turned out to be unfounded, for the coveted appointment went elsewhere.

[6] Gage to Newcastle, July 24, 1755, and enclosed petition, and Gage to the Earl of Albemarle, July 24, 1755, Add. MSS., 32, 857, folios 333–39, 342–43; Viscount Gage to Newcastle, [fall of 1755], *ibid.*, 32, 859, folio 351.

[7] *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, III (1879), 14–18. Gage's view of the Braddock disaster was that it was largely caused by the bad behavior of the men in the ranks, because they refused to attack the enemy. See Charles H. Lincoln (ed.), *Correspondence of William Shirley Governor of Massachusetts and Military Commander in America 1731–1760*, 2 vols. (New York, 1912), II, 311–12.

One curious outgrowth of the Braddock expedition was the friendship which developed between the two men whose reputations were enhanced by it, Gage and George Washington. Like others who came into contact with the sturdy young Virginian, Gage discerned qualities which were largely unknown to the public until much later. The two men maintained for at least three years after the retreat from the Monongahela a correspondence characterized by much good will on the part of Gage, who offered his sympathy when Washington failed to obtain a military command commensurate with his zeal and his services and who was eager, when possible, to help Washington and his friends. In October, 1757, Gage was pleased to learn that Washington enjoyed good health. ". . . I think your welfare will contribute to that of your country . . . I shall always be glad to hear of your health, happiness & success." [8] A few months later, when Gage raised a regiment for special service in America, he procured a lieutenancy for Washington's protégé, John Hall.[9]

Gradually, probably for lack of association, since the two men did not meet more than once between 1755 and 1773,[10] the friendship cooled. In May, 1768, Washington asked John Blair, acting governor of Virginia, to urge Gage to do a favor for Virginians interested in trading to Pittsburgh. Washington's letter was forwarded by Blair to Gage, then commander in chief. It turned out that the Virginians needed no help. In mentioning this fact in his reply to Blair, Gage referred briefly to "Mr." Washington. He did not say then that he was eager to be of service to Washington.[11] Washington met Peter Kemble, Gage's father-in-

[8] See Stanislaus M. Hamilton (ed.), *Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers*, 5 vols. (Boston and New York, 1898–1902), I, 253, 323, II, 210–11.

[9] *Ibid.*, II, 266.

[10] Gage and Washington may not have met at all during this period. However, Gage was in New York on February 9, 1756, and was then contemplating a journey to Philadelphia. Gage to Governor Robert Hunter Morris of Pennsylvania, Feb. 9, 1756, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Washington left Philadelphia on February 8 and reached New York on February 15. The two men may have met in New York or upon the road between the two towns.

[11] The author has discussed this incident briefly in "Washington and the Pittsburgh Route, 1768," *American Historical Review*, XLIV (1939), 849–51.

law, at Lord Fairfax's residence in 1769; and four years later, in May, 1773, when he journeyed to New York to enroll John Parke Custis in King's College, he stopped at Kemble's home in New Jersey for tea. In New York on May 27 of that year he attended a farewell dinner given by the citizens to Gage, who was about to return to England on leave. Three days later he was Gage's guest at dinner, but he spent the evening writing in his room.[12] Were these two gentlemen then merely polite? Did they indulge a little in reminiscence? Did they talk about relations between Britain and her American colonies, recently so badly strained and soon to be ruptured by war? Alas, we do not know. In the following summer, when Gage had the unpleasant task of maintaining British authority in Massachusetts, Washington condemned his conduct as that of a "Turkish bashaw"—an understandably bitter reference to an old comrade who had tried to be decent and helpful. Still later Washington would assume the command of the American army confronting Gage at Boston.

Another friendship formed, or at least strengthened, during the Braddock campaign was that between Gage and Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Burton. Burton, an accomplished man of the world, had lost his wife on the eve of the expedition, which event may have brought him close to Gage. While pushing his own fortunes Gage did what he could to help his fellow officer. In 1764, after Gage had assumed office as commander in chief, he secured the appointment of Burton as brigadier general in command of the British regulars in Canada. He supported Burton in a bitter clash which took place between that officer and General James Murray, who was for a time governor of Quebec. It is fairly likely that Burton was Gage's most trusted friend among the higher-ranking British officers in America. He might have played an important part in the War of Independence had he not

[12] John C. Fitzpatrick (ed.), *The Diaries of George Washington, 1748–1799*, 4 vols. (Boston and New York, 1925), II, 112, 113.

been ordered to England in 1766 because of factional quarrels with Murray and his associates.[13]

Still other friends whose acquaintance Gage made as a result of the Braddock campaign were some interesting gentlemen of Philadelphia, including Robert Hunter Morris, the handsome and brilliant governor of Pennsylvania. Morris, a bachelor and the father of at least three illegitimate children, was a son of Governor Lewis Morris of New Jersey. He was himself twice chief justice of that colony. William Allen, chief justice of Pennsylvania, a wealthy and respected man, also became at least moderately intimate with Gage. Later he sent seed to Gage's brother, and he was befriended by Lord Gage when he made a visit to England in 1763.[14] It may be added that Gage must have come into contact with Benjamin Franklin, particularly since he used Franklin's paper as a vehicle for his defense against Orme's aspersion upon his conduct. Franklin and Daniel Dulany, like Washington, would eventually become his bitter political enemies. As late as 1766, however, after Franklin and Gage had taken opposite stands on the Stamp Act, Gage declared that he had long considered Franklin to be "a very great man." Gage was by no means the last to discern the genius of the sage of Philadelphia.[15]

[13] Unfortunately correspondence between Gage and Burton in the Gage MSS. is almost exclusively official. References to Burton in Gage's correspondence with London officials is of the same nature. Some light upon Burton's career is to be found in [George Anne Bellamy] *An Apology for the Life of George Anne Bellamy . . .*, 6 vols. (3d ed.; London, 1785), *passim.*

[14] Gage to Morris, Feb. 9, 1756, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Lewis B. Walker (ed.), *Extracts from Chief Justice William Allen's Letter Book . . .* (Philadelphia, 1897), 52, 66.

[15] Samuel Wharton to William Franklin, Dec. 27, 1766, Franklin Papers, American Philosophical Society.

CHAPTER III

The Conquest of Canada

WHEN the forty-fourth reached Albany in the fall of 1755, there was little to do but settle down in winter quarters, and Gage's duties as commanding officer of the regiment during the next few months were relatively light. There was time for him to enjoy such amusements as were offered in the town and also to form acquaintances and friendships with the wealthy families in the neighborhood. Gage soon became intimate with various members of the Schuyler clan, the best family in that part of the world, as he described it to his brother.[1] There was also time to write home, not only to push his own fortunes, but to offer his advice on methods and means of driving the French from America. In addition, Gage found it possible to make a journey to New York in mid-January, 1756, where he played an obscure part in a cabal formed to secure the ousting of Shirley.

William Shirley, not a great man, was honest and efficient in civil life. However, like several gentlemen who occupied the office of the commander in chief in America during the French and Indian War, he discovered that his tasks were almost overwhelming. Besides he lacked the necessary extensive experience in battle and military administration. In December, 1755, as the result of a conference with several governors at New York, he

[1] Gage to Lord Gage, March 25, 1757, Add. MSS., 32,870, folio 345.

laid plans for the next campaign. The major British efforts were to be directed toward the conquest of Lake Ontario—by seizing Forts Niagara and Rouillé (Toronto), Frontenac (Kingston), and La Galette (Ogdensburg)—and the capture of Crown Point. Shirley obviously hoped to attain only limited objectives, the destruction of French power on the lakes and the safety of the Hudson River Valley. Although they certainly did not call for a decisive blow against Canada, Shirley's plans were perhaps as ambitious as the forces at hand would permit, and it would be presumptuous to criticize his strategy. However, Shirley was an easy target for those who were disposed to search for a scapegoat because of lack of progress in the war. What was even more important, he had enemies. Jealous New Yorkers distrusted him as a New Englander and detested him because he had given lucrative contracts and important positions to certain other New Yorkers; William Johnson hated him because he had not given Johnson a free hand in Indian affairs; the vain and pretentious Thomas Pownall, a favorite of the Earl of Halifax, the president of the influential advisory body in London known as the Board of Trade, was adrift in America and eager to gain office at all costs; and the regular army officers, unwilling to serve under an American, were hot in their demands for a British commander. In the fall of 1755 Sir Charles Hardy and James De Lancey, governor and lieutenant governor respectively of New York, Johnson, and Pownall began a campaign to drive Shirley from public life. They aspersed his conduct in letters to the ministry and the Board of Trade, and finally sent Pownall to London in the following January to complete their work. They were, somewhat to their surprise, completely successful. The home government was naturally disposed in any case to replace Shirley with a regular officer, and the arguments of the cabal had their effect. Shirley was removed from the command of the army and also lost his post as governor of Massachusetts to Pownall. Johnson, on the other hand, was knighted, was given £5,000 in cash, and was tendered a royal commission as superintendent of relations with

the Iroquois tribes for the crown—supposedly for his valuable services at the battle of Lake George, although he had permitted himself to be surprised and in spite of the fact that he was confined to his tent during most of the conflict by a severe wound. Shirley, like the Duke of Windsor in the twentieth century, was eventually exiled by an appointment to the governorship of the Bahamas.[4]

It is difficult to tell what part Gage played in this sordid business. He sent to England by Pownall a letter to his schoolmate the Earl of Albemarle in which he lauded Pownall as an expert regarding American affairs and in which he gave his own view concerning the conduct of the war. (Presumably the Earl of Albemarle would get in touch with the Duke of Cumberland.) Beyond recommending Pownall, Gage expressed no opinions which would identify him closely with the cabal. It is not unlikely that he gave his approval to Pownall merely because he agreed with that intriguer in desiring the removal of Shirley from the supreme command of the army. Gage's comments on the management of the war can be described as those of a British aristocrat and a regular army officer honestly seeking improvement, and they are of special interest because of the role which he was later to play in American affairs.

To begin with, Gage insisted that the war in America should not be in any way under the direction of the colonists. The colonial governments were inefficient and wasteful, and they were constantly at odds with each other. And certainly the army should not be commanded in the field by any American—Shirley's management, in Gage's opinion and in the opinion of most historians, was characterized by extravagance, idle talk, and a complete lack of achievement. Anticipating the argument that Braddock had been a miserable failure, he claimed that Braddock would have been successful if he had had the help of Indian auxiliaries, or better, if he had been able to employ the services of regular troops specially trained for warfare in the woods. Here Gage was surely on fairly solid ground. To prevent

discord and to secure efficiency an experienced field officer must be sent from Britain. Moreover, that officer must not be forced to rely upon the provincial assemblies for financial aid. Britain should finance his operations in part by taxing each colony in proportion to its wealth and should place the money thus raised in a single fund at his disposal. In addition, since several colonies had failed to furnish adequate quarters for the troops sent to assist in their defense, the British Parliament should enact a Mutiny Act which would authorize British officers to quarter their men in American private homes when inns and public barracks were insufficient.[2]

There was little that was novel in Gage's proposals, nor is it likely that they caused any excitement in London. Nevertheless, they indicate that his thoughts regarding problems of empire in America were then distinctly insular and conservative, even though based on what he considered the soundest of premises. He had no doubts whatever regarding the power and the duty of Parliament to legislate for America and to tax the American colonists. Indeed, he had no such doubts until many years had passed. A little later, in the spring of 1757, he informed his brother that the choosing of governors in Pennsylvania and Maryland, then vested in the Penn and Calvert families, must be taken over by the crown, since the two colonies in question had failed to contribute decently to the common cause. They would never act for the general good "till their constitutions are changed, which sooner or later must be attempted. . . ." But you will say, Gage added prophetically, that we are too busy now with the war.[3] Of course, the fact that he held such opinions does not prove that he was anti-American, nor can he be convicted of such a bias on the ground that at that time he despised certain types of Americans. It is true that Gage characterized the New England provincial soldier as boastful but cowardly;

[2] Thomas Keppel, *The Life of Augustus Viscount Keppel, Admiral of the White, and First Lord of the Admiralty in 1782–3*, 2 vols. (London, 1842), I, 439–42.

[3] Gage to Viscount Gage, March 25, 1757, Add. MSS., 32,870, folio 345.

that he applied the epithet "stiff-necked" to the Quakers of Pennsylvania; and that he condemned the Germans of the same province for failing to join in the prosecution of the war. On the other hand, it must be recalled that he found merit in Washington and the Schuylers and in many other Americans.

As the winter snows melted and the spring of 1756 advanced, Shirley was put to the test and found wanting. Because of the continued lack of trained men, the dearth of military and naval supplies, and exceedingly nasty problems of transportation, it was impossible for him to strike blows at the French which he had meditated in the preceding December. On May 25, after a council of war at Albany, he abandoned his plans for taking the offensive in the West, and decided to send the regulars who had been destined for this service to the aid of six thousand provincials gathering north of Albany for the proposed assault on Crown Point. However, the move against Crown Point was also postponed. Perhaps no one else could have organized and supplied forces sufficient to attack the enemy on a major scale. But Shirley had failed even to make certain the safety of Oswego, the only British outpost on Lake Ontario. The garrison at that place, after suffering privations during the winter of 1755–56, had not been adequately reinforced, and no arrangements had been made to support it in case of a thrust by the Marquis de Montcalm, the newly arrived military commander in Canada. When Shirley was finally superseded toward the close of June, Oswego was in grave danger.

While Shirley sweated in perplexity, the British cabinet selected his successor, John, fourth Earl of Loudoun, a Scottish Whig and a veteran of Dettingen and the '45, and finally got him off to America on May 22. The machinery in London moved so slowly that it was actually necessary to send Major General James Abercromby, appointed second in command, to America to take over until Loudoun could arrive. Abercromby assumed the supreme control of the army at Albany on June 25, served in that capacity exactly thirty-six days, and, as might have been ex-

pected, accomplished exactly nothing. There were four regiments of regulars under his command, and these might have been hurried off to ensure the safety of Oswego, but Abercromby feared that Montcalm would take advantage of their absence to crush the provincials north of Albany and to march into the very heart of the colonies. Anyway, why should he assume risks and responsibilities, since Loudoun would presently take the helm? When Loudoun did reach Albany, on July 31, nine thousand men were still occupied in training and in garrison duty, while Montcalm was moving decisively on the St. Lawrence. Although Abercromby had learned on July 10 that French and Indian forces of some size were operating on the route to Oswego and that a major attempt upon that place was sorely feared, he had done no more than to order Gage to hold the forty-fourth in readiness to march to its relief.

Loudoun also failed to realize the imminent danger to Oswego. On August 4 he instructed General Daniel Webb to take the forty-fourth to Oswego, inspecting troops, examining forts, and building storehouses on the way. Finally, on August 12, sufficient supplies were available and the regiment set out. Gage was second in command on this expedition. On the seventeenth Webb reached the German Flats, where he learned that Oswego was attacked. The following day news came that it had fallen. Montcalm, correctly auguring that the British would not strike at Crown Point, had hurried a well-appointed force of 3,200 men across Lake Ontario and had made an easy conquest, the capitulation taking place on August 12. Webb moved on westward to the Great Carrying Place between the Mohawk River and Wood Creek, where a British force was building forts to assure a safe communication between Oswego and Albany. Fearing that Montcalm might turn eastward against him, Webb demolished the forts on August 31 and retreated down the Mohawk. A bad beginning for Loudoun, a harbinger of failures to follow. The provincials, based at Fort Edward and Fort William Henry, were ill-trained and were dying like flies because of the dirtiness of

their camps. Loudoun, worried by the thought that Montcalm might reappear at Crown Point, dared not order them into the field. In November they went home, having achieved nothing for their sufferings, unless their presence had persuaded the French not to attack from Crown Point. Gage, who had been bivouacked with them after returning from Webb's expedition, moved into winter quarters at Albany.[4]

In the quiet little Dutch town—not so quiet as usual because of the presence of troops—Gage spent another military off season as an ambitious and dissatisfied lieutenant colonel. Although drill work and presiding over courts-martial occupied some of his energies, he found leisure to read accounts of Admiral George Anson's voyage around the world in 1740–44 and to study the problem of scurvy, that scourge which had exacted such a heavy toll from Anson's men and which was almost equally terrible to soldiers in isolated winter quarters. Would it not be a good idea, he urged his brother, to try issuing to the men cider instead of beer? Cider might be a good substitute for fresh vegetables, very difficult to furnish the distant posts in wintertime.[5] He also found time to consider the strategic problem in America. Indeed, he was one of the first to propose that the British abandon half measures and strike a deathblow at New France. He pointed out that Quebec was the key to Canada and contended that a major British attack on that citadel should be made from the sea. Declaring that campaigning via Lake Champlain and Lake Ontario could not achieve the conquest of the French province, Gage correctly prophesied that the task would be largely accomplished when the British were lucky enough to possess for a time naval and military preponderance at the mouth of the St. Lawrence.

Probably Gage's advancement of ideas on scurvy and strategy,

[4] The best account of the personalities and activities of Generals Shirley and Loudoun is given in Stanley M. Pargellis, *Lord Loudoun in North America* (New Haven, 1933). Herbert L. Osgood, *The American Colonies in the Eighteenth Century*, 4 vols. (New York, 1924), IV, contains a sober and accurate description of the French and Indian War.

[5] Later, when Gage had the necessary authority, he insisted that his men be supplied with fresh vegetables whenever possible.

ideas which he presented in letters to his brother in the full knowledge that they would be forwarded to Newcastle, were part of a campaign for promotion, since Gage still held the rank of lieutenant colonel and longed for a higher one. In the same letters he begged the viscount to do everything possible to push his claims. When Colonel James Prevost of the newly raised sixtieth regiment, the Royal Americans, threatened in the spring of 1757 to resign, Gage promptly wrote to Lord Barrington for the succession. He had Loudoun's blessing, but Prevost, always a marplot, kept his commission. Nor was Lord Gage able to obtain for him other colonelcies of regiments in America which fell vacant. Perhaps the only good news which came to Tom that spring was that of his brother's happy marriage. In May at New York, when about to sail for Halifax, he received the tidings. His response should stamp as completely false charges made later that he was a cold and callous man. ". . . as [your letter] contains such warm expressions of your happyness I have received more joy from it, than any letter I have ever received from you: I need not repeat my wishes for all the good that Providence can bestow upon you, my silence will equally convince you of my sentiments towards you, as if I used the highest expressions of love & friendship; we have lived long together, & know each other sufficiently, & want not the help of new professions. . . ." [6]

Although Gage was still a lieutenant colonel when the campaign of 1757 opened, he was something of a marked man, for Loudoun trusted him and insisted upon his attendance in a great enterprise. Loudoun, if dilatory and overfond of paper work, was industrious and not without intelligence. Since arrangements to add several regiments of regulars to his forces had been completed in 1756 and since large reinforcements were to be sent out in 1757, he was enabled to plan a major blow. Like Gage and other capable military men he came to the conclusion that Canada was to be won only by a land and sea attack on Quebec

[6] Gage to Lord Gage, April 8, 1757, Add. MSS., 32,870, folios 383–94; *id.* to *id.*, May 23–24, 1757, *ibid.*, 32,871, folio 125; Lord Gage to Newcastle, July 11, 1757, *ibid.*, 32,872, folio 176.

from the mouth of the St. Lawrence. Loudoun planned to take six regiments from New York to Halifax, to join there a fleet and another force of about the same size, and to make his appearance in the St. Lawrence basin as early in the year as humanly possible. It was vital that he arrive before Quebec promptly in order to forestall French reinforcements from Europe and in order to prevent Montcalm from taking advantage of his absence to assail the New York frontier, which would be defended by three regiments of regulars and whatever provincials took the field in that area. William Pitt, the mighty Pitt who became the most potent figure in the cabinet in November, 1756, agreed that an attempt upon Quebec should be made. Pitt promised to prevent the French from sending aid to Canada, and he sent seven regiments and a fleet to the appointed rendezvous at Halifax. Unfortunately, however, delays in moving troops and danger from enemy warships held up Loudoun in New York Harbor for weeks, and the fleet from England was detained by bad weather. It was not until the beginning of July that the British forces joined. Further difficulties then developed, for Pitt had virtually insisted that Loudoun take the fort of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island before attempting Quebec. Loudoun hesitated, and while he hesitated, a number of French ships managed to reach a harbor at Louisbourg. Then Loudoun discovered that the French fleet gathered there was more powerful than the British. Since naval assistance was not forthcoming from England—partly because Pitt was temporarily forced out of office—Loudoun reluctantly returned from Halifax to New York in August. Abercromby, Gage, and Burton, who had accompanied him on this hazardous and ill-starred enterprise, later called the "cabbage planting expedition," returned with him. On landing they learned of a new disaster.

While Loudoun sojourned at Halifax, Montcalm, realizing that Quebec was safe for the time being, hurriedly collected about 6,000 men and 1,500 Indians for a rapid raid toward Albany. This move, as mentioned previously, had been anticipated by the

British, and Webb had been given 1,400 regulars and nearly 5,000 provincials to counter it. However, Webb, palsied physically and mentally, failed to maintain naval control of Lake George and to collect his troops at the critical spot, Fort William Henry at the south end of the lake. Lieutenant Colonel George Munro, with about 2,200 men, tried to hold that post, while the bulk of the British forces remained at Fort Edward, a few miles away, and at other stations to the south. Montcalm began the siege of Fort William Henry on August 4. On July 30, suddenly realizing the gravity of the situation, Webb sent out couriers to the New England governors begging for aid. Large bodies of colonial militia immediately began their march to the danger zone, but it was too late. After a week's siege Munro was forced to capitulate. To the horror of everyone Montcalm's Indian allies got out of control and butchered a number of the helpless captives.

When Loudoun reached New York, Montcalm had retreated with his rich spoils. Loudoun began to lay plans for the next campaign but neglected to forward them to England, for he resented Pitt's interference. He merely sent the necessary information regarding the situation to Pitt and asked for orders. In fact, he was on the way out, and he probably knew it. However, before Pitt's decision reached America, months passed and Loudoun was able to project a surprise winter attack on Ticonderoga. This bold venture, which was undertaken in February by the brave Viscount George Augustus Howe, failed completely, as Gage, once more quartered at Albany, had predicted it would. By that time, although Gage had enjoyed Loudoun's favor, he had lost confidence in the commander in chief. There is no clear evidence that he joined a party among the English officers which had been formed to work against their Scottish leader; on the other hand, he seems to have thought Loudoun should go.[7]

Nevertheless, it was Loudoun who arranged matters so that

[7] Thomas Balch (ed.), *Letters and Papers Relating Chiefly to the Provincial History of Pennsylvania . . .* (Philadelphia, 1855), 113; Pargellis, *Lord Loudoun in North America,* 349–50, 364.

Gage could obtain his long-coveted colonelcy. At the close of 1757 Pitt, in order to give them rank above colonial officers commanding provincial regiments, advanced all the lieutenant colonels of the regulars in America to colonels upon the American establishment only—which arrangement would have given Gage a temporary step up.[8] Meanwhile, however, Gage had devised a scheme to secure for himself a permanent colonelcy. In December, 1757, harking back to his earlier suggestion that disciplined troops trained in irregular warfare would be of great value in America because of the peculiar conditions of warfare in the woods, Gage proposed to Loudoun at New York the organization of a special regiment of light infantry under his own command. He agreed to raise and clothe the regiment, five hundred men in this case, provided that the government give him £3,500, the price of his existing commission. Loudoun heartily approved of the plan, authorized Gage to choose a number of experienced sergeants and corporals from the regulars, and permitted him to select his own officers. Gage was to enlist the rank and file in America. No Frenchmen and no deserters were to be accepted, and the troops were to be "active, young and healthy and strong, free from all ruptures, sprains or any bodily ailment whatever." Loudoun also graciously lent £2,600 from army funds to help cover expenses, to be repaid by Gage only in the event that superior officers in London sanctioned his scheme, which they did in due time.

The formation of the eightieth, as Gage's "chausseurs" came to be designated, was a landmark in military history, for Gage organized "the first definitely light-armed regiment in the British army." [9] The man certainly had ideas in regard to the business of soldiering—he had hit upon a device which would combine discipline with freedom and rapidity of movement. That device, as Gage had argued in January, 1756, would probably

[8] Viscount Barrington sent Gage the news on December 27. Shute [Barrington], *The Political Life of William Wildman Viscount Barrington . . .* (London, 1814), 38.

[9] Pargellis, *Lord Loudoun in North America,* 305.

have done more to help Braddock than large bodies of undisciplined woodsmen.

After reaching his agreement with Loudoun, Gage departed for Brunswick (now New Brunswick) in New Jersey for the Christmas holidays, where he set up recruiting headquarters. Brunswick, a small village, had no special merits as a source of raw material for the new regiment, and Gage did not go there for military purposes alone. Indeed, his major motive was undoubtedly a desire to spend the Christmas holidays with the Peter Kemble family [10] who lived there. How long Gage had known members of that family is not clear. He may have come into contact with it as early as 1755, when the forty-fourth passed through the town en route from Philadelphia to New York. Robert Hunter Morris, his Philadelphia friend, who was intimate with the Kembles, may have introduced Gage to them. Possibly Gage met one or more of the Kembles in New York or Albany late in 1755 or in 1756, since they were closely related

[10] Peter Kemble was the head of one of the "best families" in the middle colonies. His father was a merchant in Turkey, and his mother was a Greek lady named Mavrocordato. Born at Smyrna in 1704, he was given a good classical education in England. After engaging in business in Amsterdam and in voyages to the Levant and Africa, he removed to New Jersey about 1730. A handsome man, well-read in the classics and history, and possessing notably fine manners, he prospered, acquiring among other properties Negro slaves and a fine library. By 1750 he had an attractive home at Brunswick and had become prominent in New Jersey politics. A little later he built a mansion near Morristown, where he died in 1789 and where his name is perpetuated in the lofty hill called Mount Kemble. His home in Brunswick was for many years before the War of Independence a stopping place for travelers of distinction on the road between Philadelphia and New York, for it was famous for its hospitality.

Peter Kemble married twice. His first wife, Gertrude Bayard, was a member of the well-known New York family of that name. She was a cousin of Philip Schuyler, James De Lancey, and various other Schuylers, De Lanceys, and Van Cortlandts. She bore seven children, Samuel, Richard, Peter, Stephen, William, Margaret, and Judith. By a later marriage with Elizabeth Tuite of Trenton he had two more children.

During the Revolutionary War Washington's army used Kemble's property at Morristown for winter quarters. Washington treated Kemble, whom he had known previously, with the utmost respect. The most informative sketch of Kemble is to be found in Gregory B. Keen, "The Descendants of Jöran Kyn, the Founder of Upland," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, VI (1882), 207–208. This sketch is based on materials furnished by descendants.

to the Schuylers, Van Cortlandts, and De Lanceys. Certainly Gage was well known by repute to the Kembles after May, 1757, when Stephen, a son of Peter, was commissioned as ensign in Gage's regiment.

In visiting Brunswick, although Gage later displayed great fondness for Stephen Kemble, we may safely conjecture that he was more interested in Stephen's sister Margaret. Margaret was then about twenty-four years of age and the proud beauty of a town noted for the charm of its women. In fact Margaret Kemble was known as a belle in social circles throughout the middle colonies. If Gage was not in love with her before his visit, he certainly was at the close of his stay in Brunswick. No doubt the memory of his earlier tragic love match had faded because of the passage of time and new and varied scenes. It is not difficult to understand why his attentions were well received. His courtship of the "Duchess," as his fellow officers called Margaret, was certainly not unsuccessful, for their nuptials took place immediately after the close of the following campaign.

Gage remained at Brunswick as long as possible after the holidays, until the end of January, when he received orders from Loudoun to report at Albany. Between periods of courting he chose the officers of his regiment and sent some of them out to recruit. Among them were Washington's friend, John Hall; Henry Gladwin, a protégé of the Duke of Devonshire; and, as one might expect, Stephen Kemble. Others were sprightly young men who had learned about ranging and woods-fighting from the noted partisan leader Robert Rogers.

In February Gage and his friend Ralph Burton went up to Albany from New York and entered into preparations for the coming spring. The military outlook was more promising in America than before because the restless energy of the dominating Pitt was infusing new life into the army. Soon the plan for the year became clear: Abercromby, titular commander in chief, would operate against Ticonderoga and Crown Point; Major General Jeffrey Amherst and Admiral Boscawen were simul-

taneously to attack Louisbourg, and if possible Quebec, with large forces from England; and Brigadier General John Forbes was to attempt the capture of Fort Duquesne. Gage accompanied Forbes to Philadelphia in April, but later returned northward to serve under Abercromby.

Once again the main British forces pushed northward along the shores of Lake George. This time the army consisted of more than 15,000 men, almost half of whom were regulars. As it moved forward through the ruins of Fort William Henry toward Ticonderoga early in July, Montcalm, with a force less than one third in size, hastily made preparations to meet a seemingly desperate situation. He decided to make a stand at Ticonderoga and built a breastwork of logs and an abattis of sharpened stakes west of the fort. Abercromby ordered his infantry to make a direct frontal assault against the breastwork. Again and again the British gallantly charged amidst a rain of shell and shot. It was useless and worse than useless, for it was impossible to traverse the abattis, much less to scale the wall of logs behind it. In the thick of the fray was Gage, who was in command of part of the advance guard. With his usual luck when the bullets were flying, he was only slightly wounded. If he had been killed, as Viscount Howe had been on the day before, he would have been remembered in America as a hero. Many others were not so fortunate; Abercromby could afterward count two thousand casualties. Montcalm had scored again, for Abercromby himself made no further gestures toward taking the offensive.

In the meantime, however, British power was beginning to tell in other quarters. While Boscawen maintained naval superiority in the waters round about, Amherst deliberately but surely reduced Louisbourg, though not in time to proceed against Quebec; Forbes slowly advanced across the Alleghenies and occupied Fort Duquesne, abandoned by its French garrison in the face of an overwhelming force; and Colonel John Bradstreet, after extracting permission from Abercromby to make a trial, led three thousand provincials to Oswego and across Lake On-

tario to the capture and destruction of Fort Frontenac. The wings of the French position had been turned; for once the promises of the spring had not become uniformly the sorrows of summer and fall.

For Gage the fall of 1758 was by no means a sad time. As soon as he had brought up Abercromby's rear guard and placed it in winter quarters, he sped to New York. There in November he met again his old acquaintance, Amherst, a man after his own heart and the newly chosen commander in chief. There also he received the glad news that his brother's constant solicitations had brought him an appointment as brigadier general on the American establishment. Lord Gage had pressed hard to secure for him the colonelcy of the old-line regiment vacated by the death of Howe. The Duke of Newcastle, associated with Pitt in the cabinet after July, 1757, had felt obliged to refuse it and had arranged a valuable consolation prize. Newcastle had promised in addition that Gage would be given an old-line regiment before peace should be made so that he would not be left without a command when the armed forces were reduced, since it was unlikely that the eightieth would be kept in service after the close of hostilities.[11] The excitement caused by the great news must have been raised to an exceedingly high pitch, since Gage was on his way to Brunswick to be married. Wrote John Appy, a desk officer at New York, on December 11 to Colonel Frederick Haldimand, whose English was not too good, "Gage est parti jeudi passé pour Brunswick ou il a du le lendemain epouser la duchesse."[12] On Friday, December 8, the ceremony was performed by an Anglican clergyman, since the Kembles, like Gage, were affiliated with the Established Church.

[11] Lord Gage to Newcastle, Aug. 23, 1758, Add. MSS., 32,883, folio 64; Newcastle to Lord Gage, Aug. 27, 1758, *ibid.*, folio 131; Major John Tulliken to Henry Bouquet, Nov. 28, 1758, Sylvester K. Stevens, *et al.* (eds.), *The Papers of Col. Henry Bouquet*, Series 21, 643 (mimeograph, Harrisburg, 1940), 127.

[12] Norreys O. O'conor, *A Servant of the Crown in England and in North America, 1756–1761: Based upon the papers of John Appy, Secretary and Judge Advocate of His Majesty's Forces* (New York, London, 1938), 129–30.

Gage's honeymoon was spent only in part in New Jersey, for the beginning of the new year brought orders to assume the important command of Albany and all the forts in its neighborhood.[13] Amherst, well disposed toward the new brigadier, hoped to make good use of his talents. Accordingly the newly married couple proceeded to New York and thence to Albany, where they arrived in mid-January. Mrs. Gage remained in Albany until spring, and they were no doubt quite happy. Certainly they did not lack good food, because Gage had hams, tongue, and lemons sent up from New York. Meanwhile, army business went on. Gage tried earnestly to make his officers and men as comfortable as possible in winter quarters. On February 15 he wrote facetiously to the bachelor Haldimand, who was in charge of Fort Edward under Gage:

> Nature is ever indulgent to the necessitous, and tho' she offers you nothing but ice and snow upon her surface she will supply you with brick-clay underneath the snow which I have seen used in many villages of Europe. Tho' Fort Edward should be most ungrateful, Lake George, however, will be more kind and furnish you both stone and lime besides the bricks of the many chimneys that were built there, and I think with such materials your men may *rub thro' the winter* as well as their predecessors or even those that pass it *à coté des jolies femmes*. . . . You have managed so dextrously with both [hay and provisions] that my fears are over. . . . I have some old magazines scarce worth reading. They are at present lent out but I will send them to you by some other opportunity.[14]

Amherst, a tall, thin gentleman with an aquiline nose, was never a popular man. He was grave, formal, cautious, taciturn, and cold to strangers, especially cold to those who had not chosen English parents of the right stock; nor was he an educated man. He was, nevertheless, intelligent, devoted to his profession, and thoroughly honest. Unscrupulous contractors, cunning poli-

[13] Major General Jeffrey Amherst to Gage, Dec. 30, 1758, Sir Jeffrey Amherst MSS., IV, William L. Clements Library.

[14] A part of this letter is printed in an interesting biography, Jean N. McIlwraith, *Sir Frederick Haldimand* (*The Makers of Canada*, Toronto, 1910), 23–24.

ticians, and wirepullers heartily disliked him; both Gage and Wolfe held him in the highest esteem. No genius in the art of war, Amherst was a good administrator; he compensated for his lack of inspiration in the field by a dogged perseverance; and he was grimly determined to shatter French Canada. In the early months of 1759 in one of the many letters he wrote to Gage carrying news of European events and local gossip—Amherst could and did unbend to Gage, a fellow aristocrat—he expressed pride in the achievements of the previous year and declared, "We must keep the ball rolling, one campaign will do all."

Amherst's optimism was not unfounded. The impetus furnished by Pitt brought ever larger and more powerful forces to bear against France and her empire; the British navy was growing rapidly; and the American colonies were contributing men and money more generously than ever before. Meanwhile, Canada was growing ever weaker from neglect. Some 50,000 British troops, including over 20,000 regulars, were available in America to renew the struggle. Pitt and Amherst planned a campaign of the type which has since been named the "pincers movement." Wolfe, who had served under Amherst at Louisbourg, was given 7,000 regulars and naval support from Admiral Charles Saunders, with instructions to assail Quebec. Simultaneously Amherst was to move northward toward Montreal by the Lake Champlain route, while a third force was to take Niagara and La Galette and to proceed to the same destination via the St. Lawrence. Rumor had it that Gage was to have the command of this third army,[15] but Brigadier General John Prideaux finally received the post.

In May Amherst marched northward from Albany, collecting over 11,000 men as he went. Two months later he appeared before Ticonderoga and began a methodical investment. But Ticonderoga proved an easy conquest, for Montcalm had remained in Quebec with the major part of his forces and had instructed his aides merely to delay Amherst as long as possible. On July 26, discovering that the fort had been abandoned, partly because

[15] The New York *Mercury*, May 28, 1759.

of heavy fire from the British artillery, Amherst triumphantly marched in. Ten days later he occupied Crown Point without a struggle. The French had withdrawn their forces to the Île aux Noix. Instead of pushing on to Montreal the British commander began to strengthen the two forts, to build roads between them and British settlements, and to construct boats on Lake Champlain. Amherst was apparently unable to move forward until he had secured control of the lake. In any case, he was chiefly occupied after mid-August in getting ready for the next campaign.

If Amherst himself had not moved decisively, he nevertheless expected others to do so. Prideaux, followed by five thousand men and a considerable body of Indians under Sir William Johnson, had advanced rapidly westward, had reoccupied Oswego, and had laid siege to Niagara early in July. When Prideaux was accidentally slain, Johnson, though without a commission in the regulars, took over. He beat off a relieving force of French and Indians from the southward and brought the siege to a successful conclusion on July 24. Simultaneously Haldimand, a Swiss soldier of fortune who had entered British service, defeated a French attempt on Oswego. Meanwhile, the news of the death of Prideaux was relayed to Amherst, who received it on July 28. The commander in chief promptly ordered Gage, who had been serving on his staff, to Niagara. Gage was to execute Prideaux's instructions. If the forts at Niagara and Oswego were in good condition and were safely in British hands when he arrived, he was to build boats on Lake Ontario, to capture La Galette, and to strengthen and hold that post. Four days later, after learning that Crown Point had been vacated by the French, Amherst sent a letter after Gage to tell him that there was a marvelous chance to win the war in 1759, that he must attack La Galette, and that he should proceed from La Galette to Montreal, if at all possible. On August 14 Amherst repeated these instructions.[16]

When Gage reached his new post in mid-August and assumed

[16] Amherst to Gage, July 28, 1759, Aug. 1, 1759, Aug. 14, 1759, Amherst MSS., IV.

his first major command in the field, he faced a severe test. Johnson and Haldimand had worked as expeditiously as could be expected. However, although Niagara had been put in shape for defense, the new fort at Oswego was still unfinished. Moreover, his army had suffered very heavy losses, and reinforcements which Brigadier General John Stanwix had been instructed to send from Fort Duquesne had not arrived. The strength of the French at La Galette was unknown, but large forces were stationed on the St. Lawrence above Montreal. After leaving garrisons at Niagara and Oswego, Gage's own command would not be a powerful one. Gage came to fear that an advance beyond La Galette, assuming that that post could be taken, would permit the French to concentrate against him, for he was not sure that Amherst would continue to advance beyond Crown Point. If he were defeated, it might be extremely difficult to retreat safely to La Galette, Oswego, or Niagara. On the other hand, Gage believed that an operation limited to an attack on La Galette offered little prospect of gain. If the post were captured, the problem of supplying its garrison during the winter would be extremely difficult, perhaps insoluble. Anyway, Canada could not be won from Lake Ontario. Why did not Amherst himself move upon Montreal so that the French would not be able to concentrate against Wolfe, who had the main task? Perplexed and worried, Gage had pretty well made up his mind by September 6 not to move beyond La Galette. Four days later he resolved, in spite of his instructions, not to attempt that place, but to confine himself for the remaining weeks of the campaign to strengthening Niagara and Oswego and their line of communications from the Mohawk Valley. This decision was heartily approved by Haldimand, but not by Johnson. On September 11 Gage sent the news by courier to Amherst that he planned to sit tight. He found time after that to do a little fishing and duck hunting with Haldimand and Johnson, and no doubt time for a little whist with the gentlemen on his staff.

Receiving Gage's report on September 25, Amherst flew into

a rage. He promptly sent off an exceedingly sharp reply which contained a brief discourse on the strategic value of La Galette, an assertion that it could easily have been taken, and an expression of his keen disappointment that it would be too late to act after Gage had received his letter.[17] One can imagine Gage's anger when he conned this scolding reproof. A feud between the two men appeared to be inevitable—fourteen years later an untrustworthy officer declared that parties supporting Amherst and defending Gage actually took form [18]—but neither man desired a conflict. Although Amherst was caustic in his remarks to Gage, he still had respect for him, and Amherst was careful not to condemn him in his own reports to Pitt. The minister was also dissatisfied because of Gage's failure to take La Galette and inquired into the matter,[19] without any definite result. Even before the end of the year, Amherst made it clear to Gage that he was disposed to let bygones be bygones. After all, Quebec had fallen to Wolfe's forces on September 18. He again placed Gage in charge of Albany and its environs for the winter season.[20]

Was Gage's behavior on Lake Ontario really censurable? He had certainly been cautious. He can hardly be criticized for not undertaking a hazardous march against Montreal since he could not depend on help from Amherst and since defeat would have been disastrous. He can be blamed for not obeying his orders to try to take La Galette. That post, which was actually weakly defended, could have been captured. However, whether it could have been properly garrisoned and supplied for the winter is highly questionable. It is also doubtful that its possession would have been useful in the next campaign. From one point of view

[17] Arthur G. Doughty (ed.), John Knox, *An Historical Journal of the Campaigns in North America For the Years 1757, 1758, 1759, and 1760,* 3 vols. (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1914–19), III, 210–11, 215, 217–26; Amherst to Gage, Sept. 25, 1759, Amherst MSS., IV.

[18] Benjamin Roberts to Gage, July 12, 1773, Gage MSS.

[19] William Pitt to Amherst, Dec. 11, 1759, E. B. O'Callaghan (ed.), *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York . . .* , 10 vols. (Albany, 1856–61), VII, 418.

[20] See Amherst to Gage, Nov. 21, 1759, Amherst MSS., IV.

Gage lacked moral courage; from another he was bold enough to disregard a specific order which he thought unwise.

In any case, the failure of Amherst and Gage to press on toward Montreal made the task laid out for Wolfe more hazardous than it had earlier appeared to be. Unlike his two friends, Wolfe was willing to risk everything for success, and he pushed forward in the face of almost overwhelming difficulties. How well Admiral Saunders, without fuss or bombast, did his part of the job is little known; how Wolfe ascended the cliffs to the Plains of Abraham and routed Montcalm is common knowledge. If he had been defeated—fortune certainly favored the brave at Quebec—he would have passed into history as a bold, but reckless commander. As it was, dead with his antagonist, Wolfe was acclaimed the conqueror of Canada. Actually, Canada was by no means completely conquered. However, the mighty fortress of Quebec was in British hands. In due time Montreal would also fall.

Once more in Albany for the winter season, Gage was joined by his wife, who had spent the summer at Brunswick. In early winter, a rumor spread through the army that he was to command an expedition against the Cherokee Indians, who had taken the warpath against the Carolinas, but it proved to be false. Amherst had decided to keep Gage upon his own staff; and when Amherst took the field late in the spring of 1760, Gage accompanied him. The campaign in America was not only already begun; it was half won. The Marquis de Vaudreuil, the governor of Canada, and the Chevalier de Lévis, Montcalm's successor, had raised a large force at Montreal during the winter and had laid siege to Quebec in April. Brigadier General James Murray, who had succeeded to the command of the British regiments at Quebec, was hard put to stave off their attack. Had a French fleet appeared in the St. Lawrence to support Vaudreuil and Lévis, they would probably have regained their capital. As it happened, British ships bringing men and supplies anchored below the citadel in May, forcing the French leaders to retire

upon Montreal, where they determined to make a last stand. Again Amherst decided to employ the "pincers movement." Murray advanced up the St. Lawrence; Brigadier General William Haviland, under orders from Amherst, moved northward from Crown Point; and Amherst himself led forward a body of ten thousand men with Indian auxiliaries under Johnson from Oswego. Gage commanded the rear guard in this army. Murray and Haviland, with relatively small forces, reached the neighborhood of Montreal early in September, after overcoming slight opposition. Amherst, after putting together a great armada of small ships and boats at Oswego, sailed across Lake Ontario and down the St. Lawrence to La Galette, which he occupied without resistance on August 10. A few miles below on an island in the river, a French engineer, Captain Pouchot, had erected Fort Lévis during the winter. With only 150 men Pouchot held this post against Amherst until August 25. Then batteaux and canoes carried the British army through the rapids in the river—not without severe losses—to Montreal, reached on September 6. It was all over for the French, and they knew it. Two days later Vaudreuil surrendered.

CHAPTER IV

Montreal Interlude

WHEN, after he had concluded his American adventures, Jeffrey Amherst built for himself a modest country home in England, he named it "Montreal." It is safe to assume that he did so to recall the most glorious moment of his military career rather than to bring to mind the beauties of the town so grandly situated on the St. Lawrence, for Amherst departed from Canada with the first frosts of 1760. Early in October, after a hasty inspection trip to Quebec, he hurried back to New York. Since it was necessary for him to establish a temporary system of government as well as to make plans for placing garrisons in Canada, he must have had little leisure for the charms of scenery. If Canada seemed to be solidly within the British grasp, it was nevertheless possible that the French would try to regain it. In any case, some sort of government would be needed until the fortunes of war and the parleys of the diplomats should determine the fate of Canada. At the time there were about sixty thousand French Canadians. It was not easy to set up a regime for managing these people, who were ignorant of the ways of their conquerors and who continued to hope until the end of the war that the fleur-de-lis would fly above their heads once more.

In the articles of surrender signed by Vaudreuil and Amherst on September 8 arrangements had been made to transport the

French troops in the colony to their mother country. In addition, the British had promised to respect the property of private persons and had guaranteed freedom of religion. Otherwise Amherst was at liberty to organize Canada as he would. He quickly decided to establish three military governments on the St. Lawrence. James Murray was continued in command at Quebec, Gage was made governor of Montreal and its environs, and Ralph Burton was assigned to the Three Rivers region. Considerable forces of regular troops were left in Canada to support them. All three men were to serve under the direction of the commander in chief and the home government, and they were to assume control of civil as well as military functions. They could issue ordinances having the effect of laws, and they were also to preside over the highest courts in their respective governments. Civil law cases were to be heard by the captains of the Canadian militia in the parishes, with the privilege of appeal to the British officer locally in command and finally to the governor assisted by a council of his officers. Criminal cases were to be tried by courts-martial. The governor, with the advice of his council, was given complete administrative responsibility. As military governor of Montreal from October, 1760, to October, 1763—his jurisdiction did not include the French posts in the Great Lakes country, for which Amherst made separate arrangements—Gage ruled over some 25,000 civilians.

The three years were not entirely happy ones for Gage. Montreal was a backwash to an officer determined to achieve success in his profession. His tasks as governor of a domain stretching to the head of the St. Lawrence on the southwest and to Crown Point on the south were fairly extensive, yet unproductive of fame. Moreover, Montreal did not then offer the delights of a New World metropolis.

The new governor's duties in regard to lawmaking were heavier than might be expected, for he found it necessary to issue many ordinances intimately and seriously affecting the inhabitants of Montreal. He had to meet difficult problems of

fire, disease, communications, and economics. According to one ordinance, every chimney was to be swept once a month, and every citizen was to turn out with an ax and a bucket to help put out any fire which might occur. By another, all citizens were required to gather and to convey to the water's edge outside the town "the dung and other filth" on their property. This regulation continued: "As several persons who have had their closets cleaned, have the filth thrown over the town walls, we order that all who do so henceforth shall pay 20 livres fine, and further order that those who have done so, shall have the filth carted away without delay to the water's edge, under penalty of double fines." Other ordinances ordered that snow be leveled off before each house, that a footpath two feet wide be maintained by every householder, and that hogs be kept from wandering at large. Gage also enacted traffic regulations which have a distinctly modern touch. Wagoners, sleigh drivers, and horseback riders were forbidden to travel at excessive speeds and to "park" in front of church doors. They were even commanded to give the pedestrian the right of way. Traffic on the road between Montreal and Quebec was similarly regulated, one lane being set aside for down-river travelers and another for up-river travelers. Carters and sleigh drivers were specially ordered to carry tools to open roads, and the whole population was made generally responsible for keeping them open.

Other laws laid down by Gage restricted the economic activities of the citizens in the Montreal area in various ways. He forbade forestalling by merchants, established standard measures, set the price of firewood and bread, prevented merchants from selling liquor to soldiers or to Indians, temporarily enjoined the exportation of corn, set rates for cartage, regulated currency values, and forbade monopolies of any sort.[1] In addition Gage prescribed mourning dress after the death of George II, compelled the French Canadians to furnish quarters for his troops,

[1] Gage's decrees, 1760–63, are printed in Arthur G. Doughty (ed.), *Report on Canadian Archives, 1918* (Ottawa, 1920), 23–77.

enacted a tax to repair the fortifications of Montreal, and arranged for the collection of customs duties.

Lawmaking was probably no more vexing than Gage's labors in the supreme court of his government. Criminal cases caused no special trouble, since justice could be meted out with a quick and even hand. Civil cases, however, were burdensome, particularly to one who placed justice above legal technicalities, for the French Canadians were very fond of court controversies. Gage tried consistently to secure just compromises in civil suits, but was sometimes forced to listen to seemingly endless debates by tedious lawyers. Plain fairness, he noted, was not enough for these gentry. Perhaps he had already imbibed in the army a distaste for litigation and those who thrived upon it. In any event, it is certain that he, like a great American president of the twentieth century, came to feel contempt for "pettifogging." Lawyers, he complained, deprived him of the unhindered use of his own modest abilities. Most annoying of all his cases was one in 1762 between the Jesuit order and an Indian tribe. Gage despised these "noble antagonists" and expressed pleasure when the savages, whom he disliked least, proved their contentions.[2]

Other awkward problems arose from the trade with the Indians carried on in the region of the Great Lakes. Gage at first believed it would be easy to soothe the Indians with rum, since the French regime had gone, but he soon learned otherwise. The trade with the Ottawas, Chippewas, and their neighbors had previously been carried on largely by merchants of Montreal who purchased from the French crown monopolies over considerable areas in the Indian country. A few districts had been restricted for the crown, and only a handful of trading posts were made available to all persons. Gage destroyed the monopolies and permitted freedom of trade. Freedom of trade, however, did not bring order in the interior, for the *voyageurs* quarreled constantly among themselves and with the Indians. In 1762

[2] Gage frequently expressed disgust with his judicial tasks in letters to Amherst from Montreal.

Gage forbade the merchants to carry rum to the Lakes. In the same year he suggested to Amherst that the trade be limited to a few posts only and that the military officers at those posts be authorized to establish courts for the maintenance of order.[3] It was just as well for Gage that he had no direct authority over the forts in the interior, since he could not be censured for the Indian uprising which came in the spring of 1763. A little later the problem of the Indian would be one long protracted headache for Gage.

A milder and more beneficent rule, even though an alien and an arbitrary one, Montreal had never known, and Gage became definitely popular among the Canadians. His strong sense of justice and fair play, his caution, and his good humor won public acclaim, and his intimate association in private life with aristocratic French families helped to make the most influential laymen less hostile to British rule. Gage even managed to avoid a public conflict with the Roman Catholic clergy, in spite of the fact that he detested the clerics and looked upon them as national enemies.

Like Murray and Burton, Gage found the clergy in Canada, whether regular or secular, devoted to France. He believed that the Canadians would never become loyal to the British crown until the "black gentry" had become Canadians rather than French. When Canada definitely became British territory he therefore urged that means be found to educate and ordain priests and other clerics in Canada itself.[4] Although he publicly displayed respect for the Roman Catholic Church, he was bitterly opposed to it in private. His language regarding it in letters to Amherst at New York was almost as violent as that of Cromwell a century earlier. He referred to the "trumpery" of the Jesuits, Recollects, and other orders. Commenting ungrammatically on the action of his friend the third Lord Albemarle in exiling a Spanish bishop from Cuba after the capture of Havana

[3] Gage to Amherst, March 20, 1762, Aug. 10, 1762, Leather Book I, Gage MSS.

[4] Gage to Amherst, Sept. 23, 1763, Leather Book II, Gage MSS.

in 1762, he declared: "Lord Albemarle has acted perfectly right in sending off the Spanish bishop. Those bigoted fools think they pave their way to Heaven, the more treachery & villany they are guilty of the more they are pleased to burn hereticks." [5] Again, he remarked upon the absurdity of the idea that observing Lent would relieve one of the weight of his sins! [6] He thought it most important that an Anglican clergyman be sent to Montreal to labor for the Church of England.[7] It is a rather amusing fact that in 1774 and 1775, when Gage was governor of Massachusetts, persons opposed to the British government accused Gage of secretly attending Mass.

If problems of government in Montreal were sometimes annoying to a plain soldier, the dullness of life in Montreal was even more trying. Gage and his officers tried hard to organize gay parties, without much success. The winters proved long and dreary. Letters from Amherst, filled with stale news of Europe, fresh gossip from New York, and heavy humor, probably helped to vary the monotony of garrison life. Undoubtedly Gage also took pleasure occasionally in an evening of whist and a glass of port. More important to him must have been the companionship of his wife, who came to Montreal immediately after the conquest and remained until the ice broke up in the lakes in the spring of 1763. They lived in the Chateau de Ramesay and suffered more from colds than from cold. On March 4, 1761, at Montreal was born their first child, a son named Henry. "Harry," one-eighth Dutch, one-eighth French, one-eighth Greek, and five-eighths English, later became the third Viscount Gage. It seems likely that he was the first British viscount born on American soil. A year later a daughter named Maria Theresa was born at the same place. When Mrs. Gage left for New York early in 1763 she was again pregnant, and in the spring a third child, christened William, was born. Half of the

[5] Gage to Amherst, Dec. 6, 1762, Leather Book I, Gage MSS.
[6] Gage to Amherst, Jan. 15, 1763, Leather Book II, Gage MSS.
[7] Gage to Amherst, March 10, 1763, *ibid.*

years between 1761 and 1777 were marked by new arrivals in the Gage family.

Inevitably Gage's thoughts were much occupied by the army and his career in it. He was made major general in 1761. Nevertheless, fearing that he would lose his colonelcy in the eightieth because that regiment would in all probability be disbanded at the approaching peace, he began a campaign soon after his arrival in Montreal to secure the colonelcy of an old-line regiment which would be maintained after the close of the war. As usual, his brother supported him.[8] In 1762 the promotion came, Gage receiving the command of the twenty-second regiment. Gage continued to be concerned, however, about his prospects, since it was likely that the twenty-second would be placed in the inactive Irish establishment and that further advancement would be slow and uncertain. A man with a rapidly growing family had added responsibilities. He asked the War Office in London for leave of absence to return to England, with the idea that he might obtain further preferment in the army through personal solicitation or find a new career outside the army.

Permission was slow in coming. Meanwhile, Amherst suggested that he should remain at Montreal until the cabinet should make arrangements regarding the military and political establishments in America[9]—there might be a plum somewhere in those arrangements for Gage. This was a hint that Amherst hoped to obtain a leave of absence and that Gage, as the senior officer in America, might succeed to the supreme command at New York, at least temporarily. Gage readily agreed; he did not dislike the New World, except for Montreal.[10] In the spring of 1763 news came to Canada of the definitive treaty of peace with France which gave Canada to Britain. Early in May, Gage learned that the twenty-second was to be put upon the Irish

[8] Lord Gage to Newcastle, Oct., 1760, Add. MSS., 32,913, folios 73–74.

[9] Gage to Amherst, Jan. 15, 1763, Leather Book II, Gage MSS.; Amherst to Gage, Feb. 27, 1763, Amherst MSS., V.

[10] Gage to Amherst, March 21, 1763, Leather Book II, Gage MSS.; Amherst to Gage, April 10, 1763, Amherst MSS., V.

establishment, but had no news from London regarding his personal status. ". . . I can [not] say," he wrote disconsolately to Amherst, "I am in general tired of America, but very much, of this cursed climate and I must be bribed very high to stay here any longer. As affairs go at home, I think indeed, I shall hardly be tempted with anything considerable, & am more inclined to believe, I shall get my quietus with very little trouble. . . ." [11]

The summer of 1763 passed without official word regarding a new post for Gage and without any reply to his request for leave. Nevertheless, there was something in the wind. Gage was much more optimistic in October than he had been earlier in the year. In a letter to Amherst on the twelfth of that month he cautiously expressed hope that he would receive by the next packet instructions which would permit him to quit Montreal, for he was reluctant to spend another dull winter in Canada.[12] What he meant was that he hoped to learn that Amherst had actually been granted leave and that he had been appointed to the high command until Amherst should return from England. Eight days later the glad tidings came, with orders to report at New York as soon as possible.[13] He left Montreal in a hurry and traveled rapidly by way of Crown Point and Albany to New York, where he arrived on the night of Wednesday, November 16. The next morning he took over as commander in chief. He would hold the post during twelve fateful years.

It was likely from the beginning that Amherst's leave of absence would develop into a formal resignation from the American command. At the moment when Amherst received his permit to return to England the harassing conflict with the Indian tribes of the Ohio Valley and the Great Lakes region which came to be known as the uprising of Pontiac was well under way. Because Amherst had made no attempt to win the affections of the Indians and because he had permitted a large

[11] Gage to Amherst, May 9, 1763, Leather Book II, Gage MSS.

[12] Gage to Amherst, Oct. 12, 1763, *ibid.*

[13] Gage to Amherst, Oct. 22, 1763, *ibid.*

part of the army to be scattered in many small posts and to be victimized by surprise attacks, he had exposed himself to severe criticism in England and America. Moreover, his benefactor, William Pitt, was now out of power in London. Besides, it was probable that Amherst would find England more comfortable than New York. As soon as the news spread that he had obtained leave, several candidates, including Gage, began to cast their lines for his post. Gage had an advantage by virtue of his temporary appointment, although he had been informed that he had been given that appointment merely because he was the senior officer at the moment and that the cabinet might replace him at any time.[14] And, of course, Gage had more than one influential friend at court. However, James Murray, governor of Canada after 1763, had a claim based on his services in the capture and defense of Quebec. As a son of Lord Elibank he had powerful support from Lord Mansfield, Lord Bute, and other Scottish politicians who never failed to work for their own countrymen. Rumor had it that Murray had sworn he would resign his position as governor if he were not made commander in chief after Amherst.[15] The leading aspirant for the command was probably the gallant and generous-spirited Robert Monckton. The fur trader, intriguer, and Indian agent, George Croghan, Sir William Johnson's deputy, who was in London in February, 1764, reported to his superior that Monckton could then have had the post merely for the asking; that Monckton's friends, however, were out of power; and that he would not ask for it, although he desired it.[16] With Monckton removed

[14] This information was contained in a letter from the Earl of Egremont to Amherst, Aug. 13, 1763, permitting Amherst leave of absence. Clarence E. Carter (ed.), *The Correspondence of General Thomas Gage with the Secretaries of State, and with the War Office and the Treasury 1763–1775*, 2 vols. (New Haven, 1931–33), II, 207–208. This collection of documents is hereafter referred to as *Gage Corr.*

[15] Daniel Disney to Gage, April 30, 1765, Gage MSS.; Reginald H. Mahon, *Life of General the Hon. James Murray A Builder of Canada . . .* (London, 1921), 312.

[16] George Croghan to Sir William Johnson, Feb. 24, 1764, James Sullivan, Alexander C. Flick, Richard E. Day, Almon W. Lauber, *et al.* (eds.), *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, 9 vols. to date (Albany, 1921—), IV, 339–42. This collection of documents is hereafter referred to as *Johnson Papers.*

from the competition Gage's cause prospered. When Amherst finally declared, in September, 1764, that he had no wish to return to America, an order for the appointment of Gage was promptly issued. He was formally commissioned by the king on November 16, exactly a year after his assumption of the temporary command.[17] It is hardly to be doubted that it was Amherst's influence which tipped the scales in favor of his friend. It is significant that with Gage as commander in chief Amherst retained his lucrative sinecure posts as governor of Virginia and colonel of the sixtieth regiment of Royal Americans. Before Gage's time these posts had been held by the commander in chief. Had Murray or Monckton succeeded, it is possible that Amherst might not have been able to reserve these plums for himself.[18]

On several occasions during the following ten years there was gossip to the effect that Gage would be removed, although the cabinet was apparently well satisfied with him until the close of 1774. In 1768, when it seemed desirable to that body that the governor of Virginia be at his station, Amherst was informed that he must either go to Virginia or resign his sinecure. Had Amherst gone to America, he would, of course, have outranked Gage. Rumors therefore spread that he would supersede Gage. He preferred to give up his post as governor rather than to return to the New World. Resentful because of the cabinet's action, Amherst also resigned the colonelcy of the Royal Americans. Even then the rumors persisted that Gage would be replaced. Amherst's commission for the sixtieth was given to Gage. Shortly afterward Amherst made up his quarrel with the ministers of state, and the colonelcy was returned to him, with Gage's full consent. The uninformed immediately inferred that Amherst would also resume the command of the American

[17] *Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Fourteenth Report, Appendix, Part X, 134.

[18] Welbore Ellis, Gage's schoolmate and secretary at war at the time, claimed he had suggested to the Gages the "plan" whereby Gage won the struggle for the command. Perhaps he suggested a deal with Amherst. Ellis to Gage, Oct. 9, 1764 (Private), Gage MSS.

forces, in spite of the fact that Gage was promptly given another regiment.[19] In February, 1770, James Rivington, the New York printer, had it "straight from London" that Gage would be superseded, not because he had been guilty of faults, but because he had held his post long enough.[20] In the following April, however, Gage was promoted to lieutenant general.[21] Two years later a Scottish officer and politician, Governor James Grant of East Florida, had another story. Thomas Hutchinson, governor of Massachusetts, was not popular in his colony. He would be pensioned off, and Monckton would succeed both Hutchinson and Gage.[22] Here a Scottish wish was perhaps father to a Scottish thought. Still two years more and the Scottish politicians would "get" Gage.

[19] *Johnson Papers,* VI, 570–71; *Gage Corr.,* II, 499.

[20] *Johnson Papers,* VII, 417–18. A week earlier Rivington had a story that Gage was chosen as governor of New York on Nov. 17, 1769, and that the Earl of Dunmore strove so diligently for the office that he succeeded in preventing the issuance of Gage's commission.

[21] Barrington to Gage, April 30, 1770, Gage MSS.

[22] Governor James Grant to James Wemyss, June 14, 1773, Alexander Wedderburn MSS., I, William L. Clements Library.

CHAPTER V

Commander in Chief

FROM THE time of his arrival from Montreal until late in the spring of 1773 Gage maintained his headquarters in New York. Except for occasional trips to Long Island, New Jersey, and Philadelphia, and one brief visit to Boston, he was always to be found in Manhattan.

When the general and Mrs. Gage went house hunting toward the end of 1763 they had difficulty in locating a suitable home; in fact they occupied temporary quarters until the following June, after which they lived on Broad Street in a large double house surrounded by elegant gardens. The address was not especially exclusive, for a wigmaker and hairdresser had his shop just opposite; next to the tonsorial artist was the residence of Bernard Andrews, "embroiderer." Nevertheless, the house was for nine years the center of all British military activities in America and the home of the most potent single British official on the continent.

Those nine years were probably the happiest years in the life of Thomas Gage. Professionally, he had risen almost to the very top of the ladder. There must have been great satisfaction in the supreme command of forces spread over half a continent. There is no evidence to indicate that he hoped or desired to rise still further. It was surely more pleasant to be the first mili-

tary man in America than to be the eighth or twentieth military man in England. His private life was equally sunny. The Gages were famous throughout the colonies for "conjugal felicity."

Gage was a popular man in New York social circles and among the officers of the army. Modest, diffident, good-natured, tactful, and kind, the new commander was a far more attractive public figure than the haughty, imperious, and taciturn Amherst. Some, perhaps because of his diffidence, doubted the capacity of his intellect, but none denied the qualities of his heart. It was a matter of general repute that Gage was a decent sort. Portraits of him in his mature years, although the passing years had increased his waistline, show a gallant gentleman. Oddly enough, he is reputed in maturity to have resembled strongly both the contemporary Earl of Kildare and—of all people—Samuel Adams.[1]

Mrs. Gage, although she did not lack for admirers and friends, was not so popular as her husband. One-quarter English, one-quarter Greek, one-quarter Dutch, and one-quarter French, she was distinctly unconventional in appearance and probably equally so in behavior. A tall, slender woman, she had a reputation for beauty which her only known portrait does not belie. However, her beauty, although the contours of her face were truly attractive, was not so much a matter of proportions as of personality. Sensitive and exquisite, she had charm rather than statuesque beauty. Her large dark eyes expressed both intelligence and feeling. She had a reputation for pride; indeed, she was accused of trying to play the leading role in New York society. No doubt she did, although one wonders how she found much time for social affairs, in view of her frequent confinements. It is to be suspected that she was impatient with those who did not share her interests. In Boston in 1775 she was later

[1] On the likeness between Gage and Adams see *New England Historical and Genealogical Register,* VIII (1854), 187–88. John Watts, a New York merchant who was intimately connected with Gage, filled his letters with praise of the general. See *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1928* (New York, 1929), *passim.*

MARGARET KEMBLE GAGE, DATE UNCERTAIN

From a painting by David Martin in the possession of Viscount Gage at Firle. Reproduced by permission.

described as the man in her family. Bostonians, however, were then neither kind nor very accurate in their comments about the Gages. Even in New York there was some criticism among the army people of Mrs. Gage because she was supposed to obtain special favors for her relatives through her husband, a criticism not unjustified, although nepotism was the rule and not the exception in the British army in the eighteenth century. (In this connection it should be recalled that charges of nepotism can be placed against Benjamin Franklin, Nathanael Greene, and John Adams.) In those days, unless he were James Wolfe, one did not expect to attain high rank without the proper connections. Although merit was hardly a drawback, it was not a touchstone to preferment. Mrs. Gage certainly had at least one ardent admirer. Lady Susan O'Brien, a young lady of the great house of Fox who had married an Irish actor and found refuge in New York, wrote ecstatically to England concerning the Gages.[2]

Unquestionably the Gages found New York quite satisfactory. They entertained liberally; they met all the distinguished visitors in the town including such persons as Lord William Campbell, Sir William Draper, the great Cherokee chiefs Attakullakulla and Ouconnostotah, James Otis, and Washington; they occupied a comfortable pew in Trinity Church; and they cut good figures at tea parties, in the theater, and in the ballroom. Perhaps Gage even enjoyed the Commencement exercises at King's College (Columbia), to which he was regularly invited as a guest of honor. Occasionally, of course, he could attend somewhat more exciting events, such as horse races, whist parties, and dinners where the port compensated for the toasts which preceded it. Gage was undoubtedly a convivial soul, even though he was not overly fond of liquor. Alexander Mackraby, a traveler who came to New York in 1768, reported to his friend Sir Philip Francis that the general invited the officers in town

[2] Countess of Ilchester and Lord Stavordale (eds.), *The Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox 1745–1826* . . . , 2 vols. (London, 1901), I, 191–92.

to his home to celebrate the king's birthday, June 4, and that all the officers became drunk.[3]

Because, unfortunately, so little of Gage's personal correspondence has come to light, we can now know little of Gage's intellectual and cultural interests as commander in chief. It is not likely that they were extensive. Nevertheless, one finds him subscribing for copies of James Adair's famous *History of the American Indians,* encouraging Thomas Hutchins and others to make maps of the American interior, and giving a pass to certain distinguished Harvard mathematicians to aid them to reach Lake Superior to observe a transit of Venus. However, the best evidence that things intellectual were attractive to the general in this period is contained in his insistence upon good educations for his children and his membership in the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia. He became a member of the famous society on December 20, 1768. Strange to say, his name was not removed from the rolls during the War of Independence, but remained there until his death.[4]

The expenses of Gage's ménage in New York were considerable. Moreover, he was burdened with the cost of educating his numerous progeny in England, for all the Gage children were sent "home" to school as soon as they were old enough to endure the voyage. In England they were cared for by Lord and Lady Gage—Uncle William and Aunty Betsey, as they were known to the children. Nevertheless, Gage's financial affairs undoubtedly improved steadily during his American service. As commander in chief he received £10 per day by way of salary, no mean sum then. In addition, however, he was given one hundred rations per day, which he did not draw, but for which the army paid him £2, 10*s.* in cash. (All officers drew extra rations in those days, receiving more or less in accordance with rank. Private soldiers, of course, were given one ration each.) Besides, he got £165 odd per year for heating ("firing").

[3] *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography,* XII (1887), 282–83.

[4] Letter from Miss Gertrude Hess, American Philosophical Society, to the writer, Jan. 8, 1946.

And finally, Gage also was paid the salary of a colonel, since he retained theoretically, though not actually, the command of one regiment or another from 1757 until his death. As colonel he enjoyed further perquisites.

Possibly Gage had still further sources of income from public funds. In the eighteenth century there were plenty of ways, legitimate and illegitimate, in which army money could pass into a general's pocket without causing disturbance. It is too late now to say definitely whether Gage profited improperly, but it is not likely that he took undue advantage of his position. Indeed, he prided himself that his forces were managed according to the best standards of his time. After the close of the Revolution, the Audit Office in London, investigating the general's accounts, was very eager to learn what had become of £5,000 which Major William Shirreff, deputy quartermaster general under Gage after 1767 and a cousin of Mrs. Gage,[5] had obtained from Sir William Howe, supposedly to meet "bat and forage" expenditures incurred by Gage. Apparently Gage received the money. It is likely that his possession of it was justified. He was greatly worried by the Audit Office investigation, but it is by no means certain that his concern arose from a guilty conscience. As Gage himself remarked, this investigation took place long after the transaction was completed. He had presented the last of his accounts immediately after his return to England in 1775, and had asked that they be approved. It was hardly fair, he thought, that he should be asked to prove them eight years after the event. Gage also remarked that the accounts of Loudoun and Amherst were still unchecked in 1775, a commentary on the accounting methods of the British government. Perhaps Gage feared disclosures which might prove members of his staff, especially Shirreff, guilty of malversation. Gage

[5] On this relationship see John Burke, *Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Landed Gentry . . .*, 4 vols. (London, 1838), IV, 242; *Calendar of N.Y. Colonial Manuscripts Indorsed Land Papers; in the Office of the Secretary of State of New York, 1643–1803* (Albany, 1864), 474. Apparently Shirreff was a first cousin of Mrs. Gage. His mother was Margaret Bayard. His name often appears as Sheriff and Sherriff.

and Shirreff and their respective families were very intimate. It is a fact that Shirreff was in possession some years after the Revolution of an estate near Alresford in Hants, formerly the property of the Gage family. But this fact hardly indicates anything to the discredit of Gage or Shirreff.[6] Since all of Gage's financial transactions as commander in chief were examined and finally approved by the British Audit Office, apparently in 1785,[7] it can hardly be contended that the general was a grafter or embezzler, as were so many of his contemporaries in British public offices. It would appear that he was an honest man who wished to secure as high pay as possible for faithful service.

Although Gage is reputed to have left a "great property," [8] he was deeply concerned in the 1760's for the future of his family and strove to build an estate for his children. To accomplish this purpose he bought large amounts of land in the hope that their value would increase greatly as the colonies should develop. In 1765 through the good offices of Governor Montague Wilmot of Nova Scotia he was given a grant on the St. John River, upon which the village of Gagetown, New Brunswick, now stands.[9] In the following year Gage sought the assistance of Sir William Johnson, the Indian superintendent, and of Sir Henry Moore, governor of New York, in his search for lands. To Johnson he mentioned his concern for his children and the fact that his pay, though good, was not magnificent, ". . . and as for emoluments, I have never known what they were, so that the increase of my private fortune is not much bettered. I have thought of lands if I can obtain them advantageously, and would ask your ad[vice] about purchasing of the Indians if

[6] Douglas Brymner, *Report on Canadian Archives, 1889* (Ottawa, 1890), 133, 135, 161; John Dick and William Molleson to Gage, Oct. 22, 1783, Gage to Dick and Molleson, Nov. 3, 1783, Gage MSS.

[7] P. W. Deare to Charles Greenwood, July 12, 1805, Charles Greenwood to Viscount Gage, July 13, [1805], "State of the Account of . . . Thomas Gage . . . from 1st April 1765 to 30th June 1767," Gage—Firle MSS.

[8] *Gentleman's Magazine,* LXI, Part II (1791), 974.

[9] Montague Wilmot to Gage, Nov. —, 1765 (Private), Gage MSS.

practicable." Would a location on the Ohio be advisable?[10] Johnson suggested that Gage join the Illinois Company, an organization in which Johnson, Benjamin Franklin, William Franklin, and the firm of Baynton and Wharton of Philadelphia were the leading spirits. The Illinois Company was planned with the idea of securing a vast proprietary grant between the Mississippi and the Wabash.[11] Although various writers, including George Bancroft, Worthington C. Ford, and Justin Winsor (and Kenneth Roberts), have indicated that the general accepted this offer, he refused it.[12] It is safe to assume that Gage realized that membership in this company would conflict with his official duties, since he was burdened with the task of governing the territory concerned and also with the task of recommending proper measures to his superiors in London for the future civil organization of the area.

However, Sir Henry Moore was interested in buying New York lands from the Iroquois both for himself and for Gage; and when Moore suggested a purchase to Johnson in the late spring of 1766, Johnson replied that he had just the proper tract in mind. Early in October Johnson informed Gage that he had just bought 200,000 acres from the Oneida tribe for the crown, and that Gage could have one fifth of the tract by paying the proper fees to the colony of New York. Eventually Gage put up about £100 for 18,000 acres, located in what is now Oneida County.[13] These lands were not forfeited because of the Revolution, although the State of New York seized the property of a later commander in chief, Sir Henry Clinton. Some time before 1773, Gage also acquired a plantation on the island of Mont-

[10] *Johnson Papers*, V, 187–88.

[11] *Ibid.*, 198–200.

[12] Clarence W. Alvord and Clarence E. Carter (eds.), *The New Régime, 1765–1767, Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library*, XI (1916), 318.

[13] Johnson to Gage, Oct. 4, 1766, Gage MSS.; *Johnson Papers*, V, 266–67, VI, 75, 120, 296, VIII, 157–58. In 1768 Gage was using his influence to prevent the purchase of other lands belonging to Indian tribes, principally on the ground that the Indians would later resent the loss of their lands and would vent their feelings in attacks on the frontier. It might be argued on the same basis that his own purchase was contrary to the best policy.

serrat in the West Indies which was rented to one Meade and which produced an annual rent of £600.[14]

If Gage as commander in chief was well paid, he was also well burdened with work, especially of the administrative variety requiring extensive use of red tape. His papers contain thousands of documents tied up in official scarlet ribbons. Of course, his official "family" or staff handled most of the routine duties. In this "family" Shirreff was not the only personality arousing interest. There was in the group Colonel James Robertson, wily Scot and barrack master general, afterward royal governor of New York. Robertson, as barrack master general, did so well in the way of salary and perquisites that he was not even eager for a promotion in 1773. Others were Gabriel Maturin, described by one acquaintance as "a very agreeable well-bred man," but impolitely referred to by another as the general's "pimp of a secretary"; Abraham Mortier, paymaster general, who spent much of his time in the country, leaving his duties to a clerk, and who may have owed the crown some substantial sums at his death; and John Bradstreet, major general serving as special deputy quartermaster general at Albany. Maturin, Mortier, and Bradstreet all died just before the War of Independence. Bradstreet, the conqueror of Fort Frontenac, a Bostonian, hostile to Gage and holding his office through the influence of powerful friends in England, was a plague to the commander in chief. As the leader of an expedition against the Indians in Pontiac's War (of which more hereafter), Bradstreet enrolled a body of New York provincials, in spite of a warning from Gage that he could not pay New York troops. When the province failed to pay, Bradstreet insisted that Gage should compensate him; and when Gage continued to refuse, Bradstreet used monies advanced for current bills to reimburse himself. Gage then cut off all supplies of cash intended for

[14] Governor Josiah Martin to Gage, April 12, 1773, Mrs. Elizabeth Hopkins to Gage, Nov. 2, 1774, Gage MSS. At the time of his death Gage also had some investments in English lands. He probably inherited these from his father, since part of them were in Gloucestershire.

Bradstreet's department, thus forcing that gentleman to send Philip Schuyler to London to straighten matters out. Bradstreet was not a nice person. It was notorious that he enriched himself at the expense of the crown, and it was maintained that he supported a mistress at Albany as well as a wife in Boston. Schuyler, his good friend, who served as his assistant both officially and unofficially, does not appear to have suffered from the connection. He was apparently embarrassed financially in 1761, but not after his association with Bradstreet. In 1766, when Gage questioned accounts presented by Schuyler to Bradstreet, Schuyler proposed to prove their validity in person, but Gage refused to see him—this in spite of or perhaps because of the fact that Mrs. Gage and Schuyler were cousins. The general insisted that Schuyler do his business through Bradstreet.[15]

A less important member of Gage's staff, and a much more attractive person than Bradstreet, was the brave and honest Scottish officer, Thomas Moncrieffe, major of brigade and a firm friend of Shirreff. Moncrieffe, still a young man, was left a widower soon after Gage assumed the supreme command. He had several motherless small children upon whom the Gages took pity. For sometime the children were actually included in the general's household, for the Gages cared for them as if they were their own. One of them, Margaret, who may have been named after Mrs. Gage, later caused the Gages no end of trouble. In 1777, at the age of fourteen, she fell in love with Aaron Burr, then promptly married a British army officer, John Coghlan. In the following year, in England, she deserted her husband and became involved at the ripe age of fifteen in an

[15] Regarding the conduct of public business by Bradstreet and Schuyler see the remarks of a good friend of the Schuyler family in Mrs. Anne Grant, *Memoirs of an American Lady . . .* (Albany, 1876), 216, 265–66, 287–88; John Lovell, Jr., to Gage, Sept. 5, 1771, Jan. 20, 1772, Gage to John Bradstreet, Oct. 31, 1766, Gage MSS. Correspondence between Bradstreet and Gage in the Gage MSS. is filled with animosity. Mrs. Grant states that Schuyler employed the troops in the development of his own private property, which practice was in accordance with army regulations, as long as the soldiers were paid for their services. Her memoirs, written long after the event, are often circumstantial. There is certainly not enough evidence available to argue that Schuyler was dishonest.

affair with Lord Thomas Clinton, later Lord Lincoln. Apparently in a desperate situation, she appealed to the Gages for assistance. Mrs. Gage was reluctant to interfere, but the general insisted. He tried to arrange a reconciliation between the Coghlans, but failed. He then arranged to place Mrs. Coghlan in a convent in France for three years, in the hope that maturity and her father would solve her problems. But Lord Lincoln penetrated the convent and persuaded her to return to England. The general and his lady again went to her assistance and saw to it that she was lodged safely with a respectable family in London. After two years, however, she fled again to Lord Lincoln, and they finally abandoned her to her fate. Indeed, their efforts were inevitably fruitless, for Margaret Coghlan was a born courtesan. She went from the arms of Lincoln into those of another admirer. She indulged in a long succession of love matches, including one with a member of the royal family, and she eventually found her way to the stage.[16]

Also in Gage's "family" was Stephen Kemble, of whom the general was very fond. Stephen, one of the first students in the academy at Philadelphia which later developed into the University of Pennsylvania, was a man of respectable but not major talents. After participating in the successful assault on Havana in 1762, he went to Montreal as aide-de-camp to Gage. He continued to serve in that capacity until 1772, receiving a promotion to captain in 1765. In 1772, the post of deputy adjutant general being vacant, Gage sought and obtained the job for Stephen, who thus obtained his majority. The general obviously trusted him, for the job gave him control of the intelligence division of the army in America. In 1773 Gage also found employment for Stephen's older brother, Samuel, who had been a soldier and a merchant captain, as Naval Officer for the colony of New York. Samuel discovered that New York was no place

[16] *Memoirs of Mrs. Coghlan, (Daughter of the late Major Moncrieffe,) Written by Herself . . .*, 2 vols. in 1 (London, 1794), I, 15, 50, 102–14.

for him in 1775 and became one of the general's secretaries.[17]

It is clear that if Gage rid the army of "jobbs," as he claimed to have done, he also watched carefully over the interests of his own people. A third Kemble brother, William, secured an ensigncy in the thirty-fourth in 1767 through Gage's influence.[18] A fourth Kemble, Peter, a nephew of Mrs. Gage and probably a son of Samuel, obtained his commission in 1775 through the same process.[19] There was also that person John Lewis Gage, who appears briefly in the general's papers. What his connection with the general was is not clear, but Sir William Johnson befriended him on Gage's account, and Gage gave him the command of a royal vessel on Lake Erie. In 1766, as the result of Gage's intercession, he was commissioned ensign in the thirty-first.[20] His conduct at Detroit, where he lived "amorously" but not conventionally with one Elizabeth Marchant, caused the general some embarrassment.[21] Ensign Gage died of "convulsive fits" in 1770 at Detroit, apparently taking the secret of his relationship to the general with him.[22] Nor should Gage's championship of William Shirreff escape attention. It was Gage's influence that secured the post of deputy quartermaster general for him.[23]

The official responsibilities carried by Gage as commander in chief were by no means light, for he was burdened with the task of safeguarding Britain's most valuable colonies. He was given five thousand men to hold fast for England the whole eastern half of North America, except the island of New Orleans and the Hudson Bay country, and Bermuda and the Ba-

[17] *Johnson Papers*, VII, 731; *Journal of American History*, IV (1910), 43; Haldimand to Gage, Jan. 5, 1774, Haldimand Papers, Archives of Canada.

[18] *Gage Corr.*, II, 413, 419; Barrington to Gage, June 4, 1767 (Private), Gage MSS.

[19] *Gage Corr.*, II, 692; *British Army Lists*; The Kemble Papers, *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1883* (New York, 1884), 137.

[20] Gage to Johnson, Nov. 30, 1763, John Lewis Gage to Gage, April 11, 1764, Barrington to Gage, March 7, 1766, Gage MSS.; *Gage Corr.*, II, 356.

[21] Gage to Captain George Turnbull, Oct. 2, 1767, Gage MSS.

[22] Thomas Bruce to Gage, May 17, 1770, *ibid.*

[23] Gage to Robert Monckton, May 8, 1768, Massachusetts Historical Society; *Gage Corr.*, II, 467.

hamas in addition. Under him served redcoats in Newfoundland and at the Natchez, at Michilimackinac and Mobile. He had to preserve a vast domain from danger whether it came in the form of a Spanish attack, an attempt by the French to rebuild their empire, Indian uprisings, or rebellion by Britain's own colonists. Indeed, he could well fear that enemies of British power would combine against England at some favorable opportunity. In the event of a major conflict he would lead the army in the field. In times of peace he could not be idle, for the administrative work which fell upon his shoulders was no light weight. How he dealt with larger problems of empire will appear in later chapters; here let us inspect briefly the manner in which he performed his routine duties from day to day and the nature and extent of his powers.

Although his forces were small, Gage had many minor duties, some of which were not always easy to perform. Since the war office initiated a system of rotation in service after 1763, regiments had to be shifted back and forth across the Atlantic year by year; moreover, such transfers often entailed additional transfers among the regiments in America, with all the problems that arose from the movement of bodies of troops—troops not infrequently accompanied by their wives and children and camp followers of various descriptions. Of course, the soldiers had to be fed and housed, no little task, especially since it was necessary in many cases to try to persuade colonial assemblies and officials to provide the food and quarters. Inevitably, it was also necessary to maintain a medical service and to see to it that the chaplains or their deputies did their duty. Then, too, Gage had to supervise the enlistment, discharge, and payment of the troops.

Training of soldiers was always an important part of Gage's business. He was especially proud of the discipline of his forces. Indeed, discipline was severe in his army, although not more harsh than usual in the British service in the eighteenth century and mild compared to discipline in the Prussian forces of Fred-

erick the Great. Two hundred lashes, three hundred lashes, even five hundred lashes were inflicted upon unfortunates in the ranks who transgressed army regulations; there were even occasional death sentences, usually for desertion, but these were seldom carried out. Gage did not hesitate to approve heavy penalties by courts-martial when they seemed justified; on the other hand, no evidence appears of unnecessary cruelty visited upon the men because of his policies. There is some evidence, in fact, that Gage was disposed to do what he could to make the hard lot of the private soldier as easy as possible. In 1768 many officers were disgruntled because he laid down a rule that no soldier should work for an officer unless he were paid for his services.[24] Four years later Gage issued most emphatic orders to the effect that officers were not to strike or to abuse their men, and that insolence on the part of privates was to be punished only by court-martial.[25]

In his relations with his officers Gage was equally just and kind. When Thomas Mills, a favorite of Lord Mansfield and reputedly the jurist's son, secured two posts, one military and one civil, and did not do his military duty, Gage assisted in depriving him of his commission. Nor did he hesitate to arrest the famous ranger, Robert Rogers, when he was given evidence that Rogers was guilty of treason and embezzlement of public property. That Rogers was acquitted of the charges made against him does not prove Gage's action was unjustified.[26] On the other hand, when a commissary in East Florida

[24] *Johnson Papers*, VI, 548.

[25] Gage to Colonel Valentine Jones, Dec. 28, 1772, Gage MSS.

[26] Rogers, through friends in London, was placed in charge both of the garrison and relations with the neighboring Indians at Michilimackinac in 1766. He probably used his appointments to fill his own pockets. His independent behavior, coupled with his tall talk and an invitation from a friend to enter the service of France, led Gage to order his arrest To prevent defiance on Rogers' part, Gage ordered the ranger to Detroit and arranged for his detention there. Gage's caution in dealing with Rogers is hardly censurable. After a military trial Rogers was acquitted and went to England, where he eventually found his way to a debtor's prison. With typical ingenuity Rogers opened a suit for damages against Gage in 1774 in England, just as the general was leaving for America. However, the suit was soon dropped by Rogers upon the advice of Grev Cooper, a treasury official and a friend of Gage. In 1775 Rogers was allowed

was discovered to be an embezzler, Gage permitted him to go free because of his youth and previous good record. In 1764 Gage made a special plea for a commission for Edmond Prideaux, a boy of fifteen and a son of General Prideaux, because the general had left his family in financial distress. Ten years later he made a similar plea for a young man named Barbut, whose father had died penniless in the service. In the following year, when gambling for high and ruinous stakes became prevalent among his officers, he got up a card assembly in which the stakes were limited to moderate sums. Earlier, when a lieutenant's commission was sold in order to satisfy his many creditors, Gage, who was one of them, refused to accept any of the proceeds until the others, including a widow, had been paid.

As commander in chief, Gage remained generally popular with both officers and men until the siege of Boston in 1775. Of course, there were those who disliked him, for there were officers and men in numbers who were unhappy in the service and who blamed the man on top. And there was the usual army grousing. Even so, Gage would probably have been better off to have the hostility of some persons rather than their affection. In 1767 his favor was sought by one Ensign Meara through poetry.

"Men oppressed are fondly said
to praise the virtues of the dead,
to sing the Golden Age.
Be this the humor of the times

by the government to go to America to visit his children. From New York on September 30 of that year he wrote to Gage, asking that the general forgive him for opening his suit for damages and that the general let bygones be bygones. Rogers then claimed that he had been maligned by persons who reported his activities to Gage. He believed that his own inability to secure new employment was explained by Gage's hostility toward him. He begged the general to tell John Pownall, influential colonial official in London, that he was no longer opposed to preferment for Rogers. Memorial by Robert Rogers to Dartmouth, Oct. 3, 1775, Rogers to John Pownall, Oct. 3, 1775, Rogers to Gage, Sept. 30, 1775, Colonial Office 5/1106, Library of Congress transcripts. Gage's reply has not been found.

to find a subject for their rhymes
in shadows; I'll in Gage—" [27]

An even more dangerous concoction was recommended to the general and Mrs. Gage by their faithful friend, Captain Gavin Cochrane, in 1771. Cochrane had heard that his friends were very ill with "the ague," and suggested a cure: ". . . a soup spoonfull of flour of brimstone in a gill of Mountain, or Madeira wine, take the first time (it is to be taken) when the fit comes on: the second time the same dose is to be taken when the fit is expected; & so on, if there is more occasion." [28] Cochrane's intentions were undoubtedly good.

Among those in the army who disliked Gage the most notable was James Murray. Murray, an able officer, was a determined Scot who displayed keen jealousy toward Gage as early as 1758. At that time he was a lieutenant colonel and senior in rank to Gage. In January of that year he bluntly informed the Duke of Newcastle that he should receive his colonelcy before Gage, or at least simultaneously. When Gage received the colonelcy of the eightieth a few months later, Murray actually tried to resign from the service. His disappointment when Gage was again preferred to him and was appointed commander in chief has already been mentioned. Murray was made governor of Quebec in 1763, but was not satisfied with his consolation prize. In October, 1764, he asked that the regular troops in his province be separated from Gage's command and placed under his own—a presumptuous demand that received no favor in London. As governor of Quebec he quarreled bitterly with Gage's friend Ralph Burton, who was lieutenant governor and who also had the command of the troops in the province. Eventually, in 1766, the home government recalled both Murray and Burton to new posts in England in order to put a stop to their bickering. Another enemy of Gage was George Johnstone, nephew of Murray

[27] Ensign Meara to Gage, Nov. 22, 1767, Gage MSS.

[28] Captain Gavin Cochrane to Gage, Sept. 12, 1771, *ibid.*

and very intimate with him. Johnstone, a naval officer, was appointed governor of the new British province of West Florida in 1763. Johnstone, a more contentious man than his not too modest uncle, also entered into vicious contentions with army officers and other officials in his province. He wrote nasty letters to Gage. He also was removed from office early in 1767. Later these two gentlemen apparently had their revenge upon Gage.[29]

One of the most delicate duties attached to the job of commander in chief arose from the manner in which commissions and promotions were granted in the army. When in the field, the commander in chief in America had the power to make temporary and even permanent appointments, but could ordinarily merely offer recommendations. Commissions in the army were purchased, of course, fixed prices being attached to each rank. Occasionally, however, they were issued without the purchase price. Appointments were made by the secretary at war with the approval of the commander in chief in Great Britain. Barrington did not approve of the purchase system and would have preferred to choose officers on the bases of seniority and merit, but could see no way by which it could be altered. He therefore tried to be as fair as possible by compelling all officers to purchase their original commissions, usually ensigncies. He also tried to give the senior officer in each case the first chance to buy when a vacancy appeared in a superior rank. Thus, when a colonel abandoned his commission, all officers in the regiment who had sufficient money normally advanced. In cases where there was a step up in rank each officer paid to his predecessor the cost of the latter's commission.

[29] On the Gage-Murray antagonism see Mahon, *Life of General the Hon. James Murray . . . ,* 67–75, 274, 303–304, 318–22, 329. The Gage MSS. and Colonial Office papers contain a host of documents on the quarrels of Johnstone in West Florida. The ostensible reason for his recall was that he had rashly begun a war against the Creek Indians. *Gage Corr.,* II, 51. Actually there was no war. The famous Scottish diarist Alexander Carlyle aptly refers to "the windy Murrays."

There were difficulties, however, both in regard to appointments of ensigns and promotions. Ensigncies were inevitably prized as means to a military career, and there was accordingly much favoritism in issuing them. In order to secure one it was usually necessary to have both money and an influential friend or two. Patronage rather frequently resulted in issuing commissions to boys who were too immature to perform their duties. One ensign who came out to New York in Gage's time was so young that his colonel put him in school until such time as he would be able to serve. On the other hand, able men without means or influence found it extraordinarily difficult to obtain an appointment. Frequently such men served as "gentlemen volunteers" with the army, hoping to win their swords by gallantry. Because of the carnage at Bunker Hill and a number of resignations immediately afterward, there were many vacancies in the ranks of the officers. But when Gage recommended for ensigncies "gentlemen volunteers" who had distinguished themselves in the battle, Barrington agreed with great reluctance. After all, these men had no money. If they remained in the army, how could they be satisfied, when men with means and perhaps less merit would be promoted above them? Gage, it may be added, did not ordinarily urge commissions for men without financial resources. He was guilty of nepotism in his recommendations; on the other hand, he did very generally try to pick out young men with possibilities among those who had the cash.

When vacancies appeared in the upper ranks of the service, Gage tried hard to arrange for promotions on the bases of seniority and the needed cash. However, his recommendations were not always followed, for many officers pulled wires in England whenever possible, and those who were near the fountain of favors often succeeded in pushing ahead of the more deserving. The Marquis of Granby, who served for a time as commander in chief of the forces, was particularly susceptible to requests for special consideration; neither Gage nor Barring-

ton could prevent his playing favorites.[30] Consequently, officers on leaves in England which were often indefinitely prolonged, and officers stationed at home frequently were preferred before those who toiled at their profession in the swamps and wildernesses of America. Of course, officers in America constantly asked for leave to go home because of "family affairs," "a lawsuit," "illness of a parent," "the settlement of an estate," and other circumstances, when the real reason was that they wished to improve their fortunes by personal solicitation. A typical maneuver was one initiated in 1764 by Horatio Gates, later the victor of Saratoga. At that time Gates, an old acquaintance of Gage, was a major in the sixtieth regiment, the famous Royal Americans, and was living near Bath in England. Unknown to the regiment, a lieutenant colonelcy was about to be vacated. Gates planned to apply secretly for the rank, but wished, of course, to sell his own commission. However, he could not sell it to a captain unless that officer was able to produce a statement from Gage to the effect that he was the senior officer in his rank with sufficient funds to buy. In normal course, after being informed of the vacancy, Gage would have brought it formally to the attention of the regiment and would have discovered the proper person. But publicity would have ruined Gates's plan. He therefore wrote to Gage asking the general secretly to send in to Barrington the name of Robert Bayard, a captain in the sixtieth, as the proper person to purchase Gates's commission, although Bayard was not the senior captain. Gates calculated that the general would connive with him because Bayard was a cousin of Mrs. Gage. The general wished to help his wife's relative, but he considered Gates's scheme to be improper. He asked a captain senior to Bayard whether he was able to purchase and learned that he could not. Gage informed Gates that Bayard was ready to purchase, indicating at the same time that the whole transaction must be made known to all officers who might be concerned and that it must be completed

[30] See Barrington to Gage, May 9, 1767 (Private), Gage MSS.

through the usual official channels.[31] Gates then dropped his scheme.

Gage's duties, it should be added, included much business that can be better described as civil rather than military. For example, he was compelled to deal with the problem of French settlers who remained at Detroit, in the Illinois country, and at various other places in the West outside of civil jurisdictions after the peace of 1763. No attempt had been made by the British government to establish civil government for these people, and Gage had to handle them as best he could. For a short time, while the Earl of Shelburne served in the cabinet as secretary of state for the southern department and had charge of colonial affairs, Gage was also something of an information bureau for Shelburne. In 1767 he was sending in to London at the minister's request information and advice not only upon army affairs but also upon such interesting subjects as smuggling, taxation, ways to cut expenses in America, the possibility of establishing new colonies beyond the Alleghenies, and relations with the Indians. In fact, Gage was constantly writing about American problems generally to Viscount Barrington during the critical years 1765–75. However, his letters to Barrington containing more than merely routine reports were "private" and went to Barrington's home on Cavendish Square in London rather than to the War Office; they were sometimes inspected, it is true, by ministers of state and even by George III. Gage's official reports to the cabinet member immediately in charge of American business were, except during Shelburne's tenure of office, pretty much confined to military and Indian problems, until 1774, when he became governor of Massachusetts. Of course, even before he became a civil officer, he officially relayed to the proper persons in London information regarding events in America when British rule seemed to be threatened, as, for example, during the

[31] Horatio Gates to Gage, Dec. 1, 1764, Gage to Gates, Feb. 22, 1765, Gates Papers, New-York Historical Society. A recent biographer of Gates, without sufficient understanding of this incident, has concluded that Gage's conduct proved him to be unsympathetic.

Stamp Act troubles and the crisis of 1767–70.[32] Nevertheless, Gage seldom made any official recommendations regarding policy in civil matters; and when he did, it was with the greatest of caution. It is to be doubted that Gage ever exercised any major influence, direct or indirect, in the formation of the policies pursued by his superiors. He cannot be held responsible for whatever mistakes were made by London officials in the critical years before the War of Independence.

In matters pertaining to the Indians, as has been implied before, Gage occupied a peculiar position, which needs some little explanation. When Braddock was ordered to America, the British were generally unpopular with the Indians, in part at least because of the inefficiency of the colonial governments. These had long failed, because of neglect, conflicting interests, and selfishness, to protect the lands of the Indians and to give them an ample and well-regulated trade. Consequently, the cabinet decided in 1754 to place the control of Indian diplomacy under special royal officials to be known as superintendents. It will be recalled that Braddock was instructed to appoint William Johnson, the most prominent figure in the Mohawk Valley for a generation, as superintendent to deal with the Iroquois and their allies. Braddock was also to choose a royal agent to negotiate with the great southern tribes, the Cherokees, Creeks, Catawbas, and Chickasaws. In addition, the general was to supply the new Indian officers with funds and to "advise" the governors of the various colonies in regard to distributing presents to the savages. Braddock was dead before he could select an agent for the southern Indians, but Johnson was duly appointed. In February, 1756, the home government gave Johnson a formal commission under the sign manual, and in the

[32] Of course, inevitably there were suspicions among Americans that Gage was more active than he actually was. In 1770 it was commonly said that he had forwarded to the cabinet a copy of a letter on nonimportation written by Benjamin Franklin in London to Charles Thomson. Franklin and the American cause were supposedly endangered. Possibly Gage did not even see the letter. J. Minis Hays (ed.), *Calendar of the Papers of Benjamin Franklin in the Library of the American Philosophical Society*, 5 vols. (Philadelphia, 1906–1908), I, 111; *Gage Corr.*, II, 546–47.

same year Edmund Atkin of South Carolina accepted a similar commission as superintendent for the southern tribes. Indian diplomacy continued until the close of the Revolution under the management of these men and their successors. Both commissions, and all others of the same nature thereafter, ordered the possessors "punctually to obey" the instructions of the commander in chief of the army. Moreover, the salaries and expenses of the superintendents were paid from army funds until the beginning of the War of Independence. Until 1768, when the Indian agents were placed upon budgets, their disbursements had to be approved either by the military commander or by the minister in charge of American affairs. Since the superintendents corresponded with the latter official—they were formally ordered to report to London directly in 1763—they therefore often had commands to execute from the imperial capital.

Since the secretary of state in control of American affairs had many duties, it was not possible for him always to dictate in detail policy regarding the Indians. Of course, Gage could issue orders to the superintendents upon matters not covered by instructions from London; before 1768 he could also limit their expenses except when those expenses were authorized from London. In addition Gage was compelled to deal with the Indian problem wherever his officers and soldiers came into contact with the red man, especially in the newly conquered areas, until the superintendents had an opportunity to set up their organizations. Gage therefore had power to intervene effectively in the management of Indian affairs. As commander in chief he carried on a regular correspondence with John Stuart, the southern superintendent after 1762, with Sir William Johnson, and with Guy Johnson, northern superintendent after 1774.

An attempt has been made to prove that the office of commander in chief in America tended to become a viceroyalty before the War of Independence, and Gage's influence in Indian affairs has been adduced as an argument to indicate the growing power of the military commander. However, from what has

been said above, it will appear that authority in matters of Indian relations was divided. Such, indeed, was the case. Gage consulted with the superintendents and even occasionally issued orders to them. But Sir William Johnson and John Stuart knew their business, and Gage found it best to co-operate with rather than to try to command them. Actually the superintendents had considerable latitude in their operations. Both they and the general were, of course, obedient to directives from London in Indian matters, directives which dealt rather thoroughly with major aspects of policy and not infrequently with details. Actually, Gage seems to have looked upon the Indian problem as a headache rather than an opportunity to exercise power.

Gage was not a viceroy, and there is relatively little reason to argue that the authority of the commander in chief was increasing materially in the years before the War of Independence. In point of fact, even Gage's control of the army was boldly challenged in 1770 by Thomas Pownall, the political busybody of his time, who proved to his own satisfaction that the troops must be under the command of the British governors when they were stationed within the limits of the provinces. Pownall's thesis irked Gage considerably, although it did not obtain wide acceptance. Moreover, the authority over their men of brigadier generals serving under Gage was seriously questioned by royal governors in Quebec and East and West Florida. After the death of Brigadier General Henry Bouquet at Pensacola in 1765 Governor George Johnstone of West Florida actually assumed for a time the command of the troops in his province. To his credit, Gage tried to avoid conflict with Johnstone and all other civil authorities over the extent of his own powers, although he properly contended that the troops must obey his own orders and (subject to minor reservations in garrison towns occupied by governors) those of his subordinates. Johnstone, an ill-balanced, quarrelsome man, argued his own claims so rudely that Gage finally refused to correspond with him until he had changed his

tone. It was not until after the outbreak of hostilities in 1775 that the home government issued orders which deprived the governors of any possible pretensions to power over the army. The American governors really lost very little authority because of the establishment of the office of military commander. They could no longer lead regular troops—but there had never been many regulars in the Old Thirteen before 1754. It is likewise true that they were forced to abandon part of their powers in regard to Indian affairs to the superintendents and to Gage. On the whole, the authority of the military commander before 1775 was greater than that of any one governor. However, Gage's power continued to be confined largely to military matters and secondarily to Indian affairs. The governors were not at all disposed to surrender their own powers, and Gage was quite careful not to infringe upon their prerogatives.[33] When Mrs. Gage and the wife of Sir Henry Moore of New York became social rivals and the question of precedence at social functions arose between the general and the governor, Gage refused to press the issue. When Moore attempted to assert authority over the troops in the province, however, Gage insisted on his own powers. Moore, to his credit, soon dropped the contest.[34] Governor William Tryon was disposed later to claim precedence, although the matter was again not pushed, no doubt in part because of Gage's good sense.[35]

The idea that the office of commander in chief tended to become a viceroyalty was probably strengthened by an inspec-

[33] On the powers of the commander in chief, particularly with reference to Indian affairs, see J. R. Alden, *John Stuart and the Southern Colonial Frontier* . . . (Ann Arbor, 1944), Chapter IX, and writings of Clarence E. Carter cited therein. The theory that the commander in chief tended to become a viceroy seems to have been put forth first by George Bancroft. However, Professor Carter has developed the theory and has offered substantial evidence in support of it. Although the writer has great respect for Professor Carter's scholarship, it is his opinion that the evidence adduced is insufficient.

[34] The rivalry between Mrs. Gage and Lady Moore caused much gossip and heart burning. *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XII (1887), 280; *Gage Corr.*, I, 273–74, II, 111–12, and documents cited there.

[35] Gage to Haldimand, Jan. 5, 1774, Haldimand Papers, Archives of Canada.

tion of the mass of papers preserved by Gage. These papers contain correspondence, sometimes very extensive, between Gage and officers and officials of every description in London and in all parts of America. The sheer bulk of these papers is indeed impressive, and not all of the general's official correspondence is included. However, it must be recalled that Gage was commander in chief during a period of almost twelve years, that many of his papers deal with merely routine matters, and that some of his papers do not derive from the period when he held the supreme command. The collection is, of course, a most valuable and interesting one; its size and the fact that Gage had many correspondents does not mean that his power was steadily growing. It seems that Gage as commander in chief was responsible for the maintenance of British hegemony in the colonies, but that he had little influence upon British policy, and little power in civil matters. In accordance with British law he could not even attempt to repress rioting except at the behest of civilian officials. The army could not act of itself against civilians unless it were attacked.

CHAPTER VI

The Conquest of the West

IN JANUARY, 1764, Frederick Haldimand wrote from Montreal to Gage: "I am very sorry, Monsieur, to see you charged with the cares of such a harassing war; the honor that you may acquire cannot be compared to the unpleasantnesses to which you will be exposed, and what is even worse, no one in Europe will realize the difficulties you must surmount." [1] The war to which the Swiss soldier of fortune referred was, of course, that struggle with the western Indians which has ever since been known as Pontiac's War. It had begun in May, 1763, while Gage was fretting impatiently in Montreal, and had run an amazing course before Gage took over Amherst's duties. Haldimand was quite right in asserting that the task of subjugating the Indians would be a difficult one and that success would not bring the laurels of the conqueror to Gage. Nor was he alone in his prediction. William Smith, Jr., of New York, wrote soon after Gage assumed office as commander in chief: "Is not Mr. Amherst the happiest of men to get out of this trouble so seasonably? . . .

"Is not Gage to be pitied? The war will be a tedious one, even tho' attended with success. Instead of decisive battles, woodland skirmishes—instead of colours and cannon, our trophies

[1] Haldimand to Gage, Jan. 25, 1764, Gage MSS. (translated).

will be stinking scalps.—" [2] How correct were the prophecies of Haldimand and Smith is clearly shown in Francis Parkman's famous work *The Conspiracy of Pontiac*, for Parkman manages to describe the struggle generally in considerable detail but with only a few references to Gage—and those not particularly commendatory. Nevertheless, it may well be argued that Gage did an excellent job in breaking down the Indian uprising and that one of his chief claims to fame in warfare and politics lies in the conquest of the West. "Conquest" is used advisedly here rather than "reconquest," for British garrisons in the western wilderness, except those at Forts Oswego, Niagara, Pitt, and Detroit, existed only upon sufferance from 1760 to 1763. The British grip upon Forts Pitt and Detroit after 1760 was extremely precarious, as events proved. Moreover, the French still controlled the Illinois country from their post at Fort Chartres on the Mississippi when Gage assumed the supreme command.

At the moment that Gage seized the reins the outlook in Indian affairs was indeed vexing. After the fall of Quebec and Montreal the Indians in the upper Mississippi Valley and in the Great Lakes region had very generally rested their tomahawks and stilled their muskets. They had not opposed the establishment of numerous British garrisons from Fort Pitt to Green Bay and from Niagara to the valley of the Wabash. However, deep resentment against the extension of the authority of King George was felt among tribes in these areas. Many of these Indians—shrewd politicians, like most of their brethren—realized that the permanent disappearance of the French from Canada meant for them the loss of a position of balance of power between the English and French, and they were deeply worried for the future of their race. Moreover, Amherst and his superiors in London had not thought it necessary to placate these tribes with sweet words and generous presents. Amherst had not wished to buy their good will, but rather to win it by fair treat-

[2] Francis Parkman, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac and the Indian War after the Conquest of Canada*, 2 vols. (10th ed.; Boston, 1915), II, 104.

ment. He had been against lavish gifts to Indians especially because he despised them as foes. French traders and half-breed woodsmen had taken advantage of this situation and had quietly suggested to their old friends among the red men that the king of France had not lost all his vigor and that his armies would reappear when the red men should take up arms to defend their wigwams and hunting grounds against the hated English. The result was an almost universal uprising between Lake Superior and the Ohio, with the Delawares, Shawnees, Ottawas, and the western towns of the Senecas taking the lead. The numerous English posts west of Fort Pitt, except for Detroit, had been quickly captured or abandoned, and their little garrisons had commonly suffered torment and death.

On November 17, 1763, Forts Niagara and Oswego, though threatened, were still reasonably safe. The situation was by no means so satisfactory at Detroit. Although the commandant there, Gage's good friend and protégé Major Henry Gladwin, had valorously resisted Pontiac and his followers and associates, the garrison had been exposed to grave danger and had undergone great privations. A relief expedition sent out from Niagara by way of Lake Erie under Major John Wilkins had just been shattered by a storm upon the lake and had been forced to turn back. Gladwin had been able to assure his position for the winter only through the fortunate circumstance that his besiegers, temporarily in a mood for peace, had sought to end hostilities and had allowed him to buy food from French settlers in the neighborhood. At Fort Pitt the state of affairs was not much better. The garrison had held out bravely and had received succor from Brigadier General Henry Bouquet, who had led a relieving force to a smashing victory over the savages at Bushy Run. Nevertheless, communication between the settled parts of Pennsylvania and Fort Pitt was still uncertain because of Indian attacks. Everywhere the backsettlers from New York to Virginia were exposed to attacks by raiding parties of red men who burned, took captives, tortured, and slew. The unlovely situa-

tion in the West can be deduced, if from no other source, from attempts by both Gladwin and Bouquet to obtain transfers from their duties.

The Indian problem which Gage had to face was even more dangerous than would appear either from what has been said above or from a perusal of Parkman. Although Parkman barely mentions the southern Indians in his remarkable narrative, their attitude was of critical importance. Had they joined their northern brethren—and there was real danger that they would —the British would have been confronted by perhaps the most formidable Indian alliance in American history. In the South, too, the red men were unhappy as the French prepared to withdraw from Louisiana. There also they had lost a balance of power position. The Creeks, most warlike of the major tribes, were especially aggrieved by this circumstance. Nor were the Choctaws, the largest nation, and the Cherokees, the most civilized tribe, truly friendly to the English. The Cherokees, in fact, had waged an exhausting struggle with the English in 1760–61, and their great leader Ouconnostotah bitterly hated King George's people. Both the Cherokees and the Creeks were dismayed by the advance of English settlements toward their towns. Many of the Choctaws hated to see their French friends leave their villages. The English could depend only upon the good will of two smaller tribes, the Catawbas and the brave Chickasaws.

Fortunately, apparently because of excellent advice given by Henry Ellis, a former governor of Georgia, the British government had realized the necessity of conciliating the southern Indians and had instructed John Stuart and the southern governors to confer with their leaders and to hand out large quantities of presents. While Gage was en route from Montreal these gentlemen were holding a great conclave at Augusta in Georgia and were buttressing English influence to the best of their ability. As a result of their labors and particularly because of Stuart's efforts, the situation in the South was materially im-

proved. It was not possible to win the friendship of the Creeks, but representatives of the other tribes responded rather favorably to the harangues and presents of the English. Stuart, who was a great favorite with the Cherokees, even succeeded in stirring up hatred among them toward the Creeks. Genuine peril remained, however, that the Creeks would take the warpath and that they would find allies among their fickle neighbors. Their most able leader, the great chief known to the English as The Mortar, was so violently anti-English that he had not even been invited to the gathering at Augusta since it was certain that he would refuse an invitation. The Mortar would have liked nothing better than to play the role of Pontiac in the South.[3]

Before hurrying off to England, Amherst, who was glad to make use of his leave of absence because Pontiac's War had already done serious damage to his reputation, furnished Gage with a mass of official information and a plan to be carried out in the next campaign. The major feature of Amherst's scheme of operations was a proposed "pincers movement" against the Delawares and Shawnees, who had been largely responsible for the uprising, who were extremely bitter in their opposition to the English, and who were easiest (though not easy) to reach. Amherst had chosen Bradstreet to lead an expedition from Niagara to Detroit. After pacifying the war-weary Ottawas and their neighbors and arranging for the reoccupation of Michilimackinac, St. Joseph's, and a post on Green Bay, Bradstreet was to move southward across Lake Erie and to march from the north toward the Muskingum and Scioto valleys, the homes of the Delawares and Shawnees. Meanwhile, Bouquet was to gather a force at Fort Pitt and was to march directly across the Muskingum. He was to strike the final blow while Bradstreet worried the enemy from the rear. Once the Delawares and Shawnees were smashed, the other tribes, Amherst hoped, might not be

[3] Regarding the Congress of Augusta and the crisis in relations with the Creeks which followed, see Alden, *John Stuart and the Southern Colonial Frontier,* Chapter XI.

too difficult to handle. Since there were hardly more than 5,000 regulars in all North America, including garrisons which could not be employed in the field, Amherst had already asked the colonies exposed to Indian attacks to furnish 3,500 provincial troops. At the moment, the prospects of obtaining them in time for useful service did not appear good. Gage was compelled to adopt this plan, since he was required to obey Amherst's instructions.[4] However, he undoubtedly approved of it, since he tried to carry it out most scrupulously.

It cannot be doubted that Gage fretted and worried as the winter passed and the spring and summer of 1764 unfolded. As usual, the colonies were almost tragically slow in raising men. Pennsylvania did not vote to raise one thousand men to serve under Bouquet until May, and these levies did not join him until July. Moreover, two hundred of them deserted before he could take the field. Bouquet might not have been able to move at all had not the noted frontier fighter Colonel Andrew Lewis persuaded two hundred Virginians and Marylanders to volunteer to serve under Bouquet. The showing of Virginia and Maryland was even more pitiful, for those provinces refused to order a single man beyond their frontiers. New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut did somewhat better than their neighbors, for their men were assembled under Bradstreet at Niagara and ready to move by July. Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire did nothing. Gage knew that it would be difficult to reach the territories of the hostile Indians in the event that Bradstreet and Bouquet were finally able to move, and he also knew that the enemy might evade action. In addition, he was afraid that the hostile red men might despair of their existence in British territory and seek refuge in Louisiana, where they might form a perpetually dangerous confederacy under French or Spanish tutelage.[5] Meanwhile, he was constantly receiving letters from Lord Halifax, secretary of state for the southern department, requesting an early and complete victory over the

[4] *Gage Corr.* II, 1, 209–14. [5] *Ibid.*, I, 6.

Indians.[6] Haldimand proved to be quite correct in his assertion that the heavy task faced by Gage would be underestimated in London.

Luckily, Indian news was not all bad in the early months of 1764. From the South there came, however, the evil tidings that Major Arthur Loftus, an officer in a detachment sent from Havana in 1763 to take possession of eastern Louisiana, had unsuccessfully attempted to make his way up the Mississippi with the twenty-second regiment to occupy the Illinois country. Loftus had been turned back by hostile Indians on the lower stretches of the river. Even earlier there came to New York letters from Stuart and the governors of South Carolina and Georgia to inform Gage of a crisis in relations with the Creeks. These reported that a small band of Creeks had slain fourteen backsettlers in South Carolina in December, 1763; that The Mortar had instigated the slayings; that certain towns among the Creeks were disposed to take up arms; and that Governor Thomas Boone of South Carolina proposed to put their nation to the test by cutting off their trade and by demanding immediate execution of the murderers. But better news soon followed, for Stuart, in the belief that stern measures might well lead to another Indian war, insisted upon a more conciliatory policy and managed to avoid a showdown. The result of Stuart's policy, which had the general's firm support, was that Gage was freed of the responsibility of fighting two conflicts with the savages in widely separated areas at one and the same time, although the Creeks remained a problem for the future.[7] Nor did all the reports from British officers and officials stationed to the north carry disappointing information. The besiegers of Detroit and the hostile towns of the Senecas had lost much of their enthusiasm and were making peace overtures, and the Iroquois as a whole undertook to assist the British forces. Even before the spring arrived bands of Iroquois destroyed a num-

[6] *Ibid.*, II, 1–3, 3–4, 4–5, 7, 9–10, 14, 15–16.

[7] See Alden, *John Stuart and the Southern Colonial Frontier*, 186–91.

ber of Delaware and Shawnee towns on the Susquehanna.

There can be no question that Gage was perplexed by his situation during this period; that he was very angry because of the barbarities committed by the Indians; and that he was disposed, if necessary, to take most drastic measures. He actually called into service a band of Canadians in order to convince the hostile tribes that they could expect no help from France. There is no evidence that he meditated, as Amherst and Bouquet had earlier, an attempt to infect the ferocious enemy with smallpox, so deadly to the Indian; nor is there any indication that he was interested in a scheme proposed by Bouquet to Amherst which called for the use of dogs to hunt down the savages. Nevertheless, Gage, like so many white men, had little respect for the red man; in fact there can be no doubt that he considered the Indian to be something less than human. In three separate letters, each time using the same language, he indicated that he would be pleased if Pontiac, The Mortar, and Captain Bull (a Delaware chief) were "knocked on the head" and sent to the Happy Hunting Ground by the hands of Indians friendly to the English. He never issued orders for the killing of these leaders, but he certainly hinted that he hoped other British officers and officials would make the necessary arrangements for assassination.[8]

Early in August Bradstreet finally got under way on Lake Erie. He had at his disposal about two thousand men, half regulars and half provincials, and was accompanied by a large body of Indian allies, mainly Iroquois. On August 12 the expedition was forced by a storm to land on the south shore of Lake Erie near Presqu' Isle. There Bradstreet was interviewed by ten Shawnees and Delawares who suddenly appeared in the neighboring woods. These warriors proclaimed themselves to be ambassadors from their respective tribes with full power to negotiate peace. Bradstreet should have ignored these Indians.

[8] *Ibid.*, 189; Gage to Lieutenant Colonel Elliot, March 8, 1764, Gage to Bradstreet, July 2, 1764, Gage MSS.

He had no power to sign treaties, for it was Johnson's task to conclude all formal agreements with the northern savages. Moreover, there was doubt that these ten men were actually commissioned by their tribes to sue for peace, especially since the Shawnees and Delawares had refused to send representatives to deal with Johnson at Niagara in July. Besides, it was altogether likely that the real mission of these warriors was to persuade Bradstreet to delay military action until it was too late in the year for him to accomplish anything. In any case a prudent man would have made sure that the Delawares and Shawnees had dropped the hatchet in the Ohio Valley and that Bouquet approved of peace negotiations. In fact, Bradstreet would have been justified in seizing and holding the pretended emissaries as captives. However, with singularly bad judgment, he parleyed with them and entered into a preliminary peace agreement. He agreed not to commit hostilities against their tribes for twenty-five days, at the end of which time the ambassadors were to meet him again at Sandusky to deliver up all the white prisoners held by their tribes and to sign a final peace. On August 14 Bradstreet wrote to Gage to announce his triumph. He also sent a messenger to Bouquet to inform that general that it was unnecessary for him to pursue the plan of campaign. He then proceeded westward along the south shore of Lake Erie.

A few days later Bradstreet was at Sandusky. He had been ordered to attack Wyandots, Ottawas, and Miami tribes living near that place. Instead he received delegations from them and refrained from using force against them because of promises on their part to submit and to sign a definitive treaty of peace at Detroit. Bradstreet then proceeded to Detroit and finally broke the long siege at that place. Most of the Indians in the neighborhood, long in want of goods because of the cessation of trade with the whites and in some cases actually hungry, were glad to offer up what prisoners they had and to sign a peace treaty on September 7. At this time some, though not all, of the Sandusky Indians who had promised to meet him at Detroit, appeared and

also agreed to bury the hatchet. Bradstreet was also able to send a detachment to reoccupy Michilimackinac and the other posts in the Lake Michigan area formerly occupied by the English. He then turned back toward Sandusky, where he expected to receive the final submission of the Shawnees and Delawares.

En route to Sandusky Bradstreet probably was congratulating himself for his achievements. No doubt he believed he had ended the Indian war without bloodshed. Perhaps he even dreamed that he had made the necessary arrangements for establishing British sovereignty in the Illinois country, for he had sent off Captain Thomas Morris to that region to treat with the Indians there. At Sandusky Bradstreet received several rude shocks. News came from Morris that Shawnee and Delaware warriors had stirred up the Miami Indians; that he had been made captive by that tribe; and that he had been lucky to secure his release and to make his way back to Detroit. Moreover, the delegates of the Shawnees and Delawares failed to make their scheduled appearance. A few Indians from these tribes tried to persuade him that the delegates would turn up, and Bradstreet waited for many days. Waiting was fruitless. The worst blow of all came in a letter of September 2 from Gage.[9]

When Gage received Bradstreet's letter of August 14, he was almost dumbfounded, partly because Bradstreet had disobeyed orders, but largely because news from Bouquet indicated that the Delawares and Shawnees were savagely attacking the frontiers of Pennsylvania and Virginia at the very moment their emissaries were parleying at Presqu' Isle. Gage knew what Bradstreet should have suspected. Fortunately, the campaign was not yet lost, for Bouquet had treated an announcement of his easy conquest by Bradstreet as nonsense and had gone ahead with his part of the program. Bouquet was finally ready to move with a rather formidable body of regulars and provincials, although his force was less powerful than Bradstreet's. Gage therefore sent peremptory orders to Bradstreet to forget his negotia-

[9] Gage MSS.

tions with the Delawares and Shawnees and to attack them from the north while Bouquet smashed at them from the east. Gage hoped that Bradstreet would be able to move forward by October 1.

Bradstreet was most unhappy at Sandusky, but he remained there until October 18. Then he turned eastward and made for Niagara. He wrote to Gage to inform him that it was impracticable to march southward. Bradstreet did manage to send some Indians from the Sandusky region on the warpath to the south. After losing several of his boats in a storm, he finally brought his men safely to the English outposts in New York in November. Meanwhile, Bouquet, undeterred by attempts on the part of the Indians to persuade him that an attack was unnecessary, marched across the Ohio and made his way into the very heart of the Delaware country in the valley of the Muskingum. The Delawares feared the energetic Bouquet, and they were needlessly apprehensive of Bradstreet. They therefore abandoned ideas of opposing Bouquet by force and abjectly sued for peace. He remained in their country several weeks, and they gave up to him hundreds of white captives. The Shawnees and the Indians about Sandusky also realized that the game was up, and they too begged for peace. The Shawnees sent in some prisoners and also a formal delegation to learn Bouquet's terms. He demanded and received hostages from the Shawnees as a guarantee that all their prisoners would be delivered, and he referred all of these tribes to Sir William Johnson for final peace negotiations. Then he marched his men back to Fort Pitt. Virginia displayed its gratitude for his services by refusing to pay the volunteers from that colony who had served under him. The Pennsylvania legislature, usually very slow to vote money for military purposes, redeemed the situation and soothed Bouquet's wounded feelings by appropriating the necessary funds.

The Indian uprising was substantially ended. Some of the Shawnee hostages soon fled back to their forests, but their nation had no desire to resume the struggle. Here and there in the

Ohio Valley and in the Great Lakes country minor incidents occurred in 1765. Pontiac did not finally make his peace until 1766. Emissaries from most of the tribes, however, smoked the peace pipe with Sir William Johnson and exchanged the white wampum beads which signified resumption of friendship. The major task still before Gage was to arrange for the establishment of British power in the Illinois country.

Bradstreet's campaign inevitably aroused quarrels between Bradstreet and those who had criticized his conduct. Relations between Bradstreet and Johnson were remarkably embittered, partly because Johnson scored the general in official reports to London and partly because Bradstreet had designs on the Indian superintendent's job. In his chagrin Bradstreet spoke slightingly, angrily, and freely, not only of Johnson but also of Gage. He fancied that Gage too had officially condemned him in letters to England. Actually Gage had pursued the policy of a wise commander. He had written with frankness to Bradstreet about his mistakes. On the other hand, he had given that gentleman full credit for his achievements in official reports and had actually glossed over his shortcomings.[10] Years later Lieutenant Thomas Mante, a good friend of Bradstreet who had received an appointment as major of brigade from him, compiled a *History of the Late War in North America,*[11] in which he ardently defended Bradstreet and condemned the behavior of Gage and Johnson. However, Mante was prejudiced. His bias against Gage may have been increased because the general did not give his blessing to an attempt by Mante in 1765–66 to secure a contract for supplying western army posts.[12]

Gage had hoped that Bouquet would be able not only to subdue the Delawares and Shawnees but also to procure from them an escort which would accompany an English officer to the Illinois country. Gage wished to pave the way for a military occupation of that territory, particularly of Fort Chartres, still held

[10] *Johnson Papers,* IV, 605–606; *Gage Corr.,* I, 37–38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 46.

[11] (London, 1772).

[12] *Gage Corr.,* II, 307, 343, 593. Mante did not obtain the contract.

by the French, by securing the approval of the Indians in the neighborhood. Because of the lateness of the season Bouquet was unable to arrange for such an embassy. In January, 1765, Gage therefore commissioned Lieutenant Alexander Fraser (who knew French) and George Croghan, a deputy of Johnson experienced in Indian wiles, to undertake the task. Delay was caused by frontiersmen who destroyed the gifts they proposed to carry to the Indians and also by the Delawares and Shawnees who were tardy in sending an escort. Impatient, Fraser finally obtained volunteers to man a boat and set out without Croghan. He arrived safely at his destination, but was made prisoner by Illinois Indians and was unable to accomplish anything. In fact, his life hung in the balance until the great Pontiac intervened and gave him his freedom. He made wise use of it by departing for New York by way of New Orleans.

Meanwhile, Major Robert Farmar, ranking officer in the far South, John Stuart, and Governor George Johnstone of West Florida were striving to obtain the same objectives by way of the Mississippi. One emissary, Lieutenant Philip Pittman, was unable to advance very far up the great river. Two others, Lieutenant John Ross and Hugh Crawford, a trader, actually reached the Illinois country before Fraser, but were obliged to retreat to New Orleans. Still two more, Pierce Acton Sinnott and Harpain de la Gauterais, had the same fortune, although they obtained a conditional pledge from the Illinois tribes that they would not oppose the advance of a British garrison. At length Croghan, who had not been able to leave Fort Pitt until May, appeared on the lower Ohio with his Indian escort. Below the mouth of the Wabash, Croghan and his allies were attacked by a band of Kickapoo tribesmen. They slew several of his friends and made him a prisoner. Afraid to kill Croghan and fearful of avenging attacks by the Shawnees and Delawares, the Kickapoos carried him off to Vincennes and thence to the ruins of Fort Ouiatanon on the upper Wabash. There Croghan found it possible to conciliate large numbers of Indians, including Pontiac, who appeared from the

woods. He obtained a pledge from them not to struggle against British forces seeking to take over Fort Chartres, and eventually was honorably escorted to Detroit. Consequently Captain Thomas Stirling with a small force from Fort Pitt was soon established in the French post. Moreover, Major Farmar appeared at the fort not long afterward, having made his way laboriously up the Mississippi with the thirty-fourth regiment. He had had assistance from Chickasaws and Cherokees.

While these events were taking place, Johnson and Stuart were holding vast conclaves with numerous tribes, northern and southern. By the end of 1765 peace—unstable, but peace—between the British and the red men reigned everywhere. The next year Pontiac himself met Johnson on the shores of Lake Ontario and made an end to his career as the major enemy of the British. Gage could flatter himself that this happy ending was brought about under his leadership.

One incident which resulted from the great Indian uprising, the infamous massacres of the harmless Christianized Indians of Conestoga in Pennsylvania by overzealous citizens, was not so pleasing to Gage. Toward the close of 1763 frontier inhabitants slew twenty of these inoffensive people, even breaking into a jail at Lancaster to do their bloody work. They actually ventured to march upon Philadelphia to attack some 140 Christianized Moravian Indians who had taken refuge there. Both the townspeople and troops who were stationed in that city refused to aid the Indians, and Governor John Penn finally sent them off toward New York under the escort of a body of regulars. When neither New York nor New Jersey would consent to receive the poor redskins, they were led back to Philadelphia. Meanwhile, however, at the request of Penn, Gage had sent off reinforcements from New York with strict orders to defend the helpless savages. Early in 1764, when the frontiersmen finally appeared before the city of brotherly love, they were confronted not only by the regulars but also by bands of armed citizens, including even Quakers, raised by Benjamin Franklin. They decided that there would be

less pleasure in fighting the outraged Quakers and the troops than in slaughtering helpless Indians. After some days of parleying they retreated to their homes. Franklin, who had played a most honorable part in this ghastly business, praised the army for its assistance in maintaining public order.[13] Another two years and Franklin and the majority of Americans would not rejoice at the prospect of public tranquillity maintained by the presence of the redcoats.

[13] Albert H. Smyth (ed.), *The Life and Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, 10 vols. (New York and London, 1905–1907), IV, 313.

CHAPTER VII

The Stamp Act Crisis

WRITING at the beginning of the Seven Years' War, young John Adams astutely predicted that within a century the destruction of the French empire in America would bring about a tremendous increase in the numbers and wealth of the British colonists. They would become so powerful that they would be able to assert their independence not only against Britain but against any combination of European powers. We may assume that this train of thought did not make the stuffy but able Adams lose much sleep. However, Englishmen who meditated upon the effect which the inclusion of Canada and eastern Louisiana within their empire would have upon that organization were seriously disturbed. Even before the guns of Amherst thundered at the gates of Montreal various English pamphleteers and politicians began to urge that *Canada should be given back to France* at the end of the war. As long as the French menace remained in America, they argued, the colonists would need the protection of the British army and navy and could not seriously entertain thoughts of independence. These gentlemen, with genuine cleverness, argued that it was better to keep the existing British Empire, with some few additions from Spanish territories and from the French possessions in the West Indies, Africa, and India, than to try to control the whole eastern half of North America,

perhaps losing everything in America as a result. Canada was not worth anything anyway, many of them contended. Shrewd as they were, these propagandists fought a losing fight. Men in power in London believed that the French, if allowed to remain, would continue to be a real menace in Canada; they did not wish to be faced again with the problem of conquering the province; they believed the Canadian fur trade would be of some value; and they saw little cause to fear a movement for independence among the British colonists.[1]

While it can hardly be argued that the cession by France of Canada and eastern Louisiana made the independence of the British Americans inevitable, it is clear that the destruction of French military power on the North American continent permitted the British colonists to think that they no longer needed the strong protecting arm of the Mother Country and encouraged them to believe that they owed little to the government at London. An American habit of thinking of rights within the empire rather than of duties toward the empire was enormously strengthened. The Americans made a most striking assertion of those rights before the territories ceded from France were completely occupied by British garrisons. While Major Farmar was still struggling up the Mississippi to Fort Chartres, the Stamp Act quarrel was in full swing in the older colonies.

Confronted in 1763 with the problem of governing an empire vaster by far than any since the days of the Romans, British politicians agreed very generally on certain measures to be taken. Everyone believed that Pontiac's uprising was caused in part by encroachments of colonists upon Indian lands and that the rights of the red men should be protected, temporarily, by imperial fiat. There was consequently little objection in England to the famous Proclamation of October 7, 1763, which forbade generally the occupation of lands claimed by the Indians and particularly their lands lying west of the Alleghenies. Nor did many

[1] See Fred J. Ericson, "British Motives for Expansion in 1763: Territory, Commerce, or Security?" *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters,* XXVII (1942), 581–94.

question the need of maintaining a standing army of British regulars in America to garrison the new possessions of the empire and to ward off French, Spanish, and Indian aggressions. It was decided to detail twenty battalions, on paper about ten thousand men, but actually about seven thousand, for this service. The Mother Country had never before had more than one thousand regulars stationed in America in peacetime, but it was felt that a large force was now badly needed.

Nor was there any doubt in the minds of English leaders that the colonies should contribute to the cost of maintaining this force. Most men even believed that the Americans should also contribute to the costs of governing the empire as a whole. Great Britain was in debt to the tune of at least £130,000,000, a staggering sum in those days; taxes were pretty high in the British Isles; and governmental expenses generally were much larger than before the Seven Years' War. The colonists had benefited richly from the expenditures of the Mother Country in men and money during the war. Why should they not carry part of the burden of empire in the future? But if British leaders were pretty well agreed that the Americans should give their talents to the treasury, they were not at all agreed upon the means by which pounds, shillings, and pence should be coaxed from American pockets. And unfortunately, the means were selected, or at least approved, by a singularly unlucky politician, George Grenville, who became prime minister in April, 1763.

It was one thing to believe that the Americans should do their bit on the financial side, and it was another thing to find a method or methods which would separate the Americans from their cash without arousing their ire. However, Grenville was stubborn—where there's a will there's a way. In the spring of 1764 he moved to increase the revenues derived from duties collected in American harbors upon imports. The Molasses Act of 1733, laying a heavy duty on molasses imported from the French and Spanish West Indies, had never been enforced. Merchants of New England and the middle colonies had consistently managed to get

sugar and molasses (used to make the very popular rum of that time) from the foreign islands into continental ports without paying the legal toll. British planters in the West Indies had suffered somewhat as a result of this practice, and so had His Majesty's treasury, which was annually spending £7,000 or £8,000 to maintain customs officers in America who collected £1,000 or £2,000. Grenville pushed through the Sugar Act, which cut the duties on molasses in half, to lessen the likelihood of smuggling, and which placed new taxes on other items imported from the French and Spanish islands, the Azores, and Madeira. The proceeds were to be reserved to pay the expenses for defending the American colonies. Shortly afterward Grenville carried through a renovation of the customs service to increase its efficiency. Improvement in the service was not difficult to obtain, since it had been hopelessly inefficient and corrupt. Offenders against the revenue acts could be apprehended by the navy, and could be tried in admiralty courts, *sans* jury.

The Sugar Act and, more particularly, Grenville's determination to enforce it, were bound to hurt the feelings of northern merchants who had found illicit trade with the foreign islands most profitable. Enforcement of the act might be injurious in another way. If trade with the foreign islands was diminished, as seemed likely, the supply of hard cash in the colonies, much of which came from those islands, would be lessened. And hard cash was badly needed in the colonies. With strange perversity Grenville soon brought in another measure which would surely aggravate the currency situation. Most of the colonies had long indulged in issuing unsupported paper money with legal-tender value. Although this practice helped to supply a medium of circulation it was sometimes harmful to creditors and others, including merchants in England. Grenville's Currency Act of 1764 extended over all the colonies an act of 1751 which had severely limited both the issuing and reissuing of these notes in New England.

The Sugar Act and the Currency Act, well calculated to arouse

resentment in the northern colonies, would not create a furor in the southern provinces since they would not vitally affect the interests of the rich and powerful planters. But Grenville had a way to sting the southern planters as well as the northern merchants. The Sugar Act would not bring in more than a fraction of the sum needed to support the army in America. How could additional cash be raised? More than one person had earlier advocated the imposition of a stamp tax in America. Politicians who did not wish to have their fingers burned had shied away from the proposal. Grenville, however, adopted it. When he introduced the Sugar Act he let it be known that a stamp tax was contemplated, but that he would abandon the idea if the colonists could offer some effective method of raising money in America less injurious to American feelings. Shortly afterward when a number of persons in London who served as agents for American colonies approached Grenville, he pretended to be very anxious to please the Americans insofar as possible, but refused to listen to a suggestion by the agents that the colonies be permitted to vote the needed money through their respective assemblies. The assemblies, he knew very well, and so did the agents, could not be depended upon to vote the money. Nor would Grenville give serious thought to a scheme proposed by Benjamin Franklin, agent for Pennsylvania. Franklin suggested that Parliament please the Americans by establishing an American paper currency and obtain a revenue from that currency. Actually Grenville was absolutely determined to impose the tax, and his solicitude was assumed rather than real. In the spring of 1765 he brought in his bill. The cynical and malicious busybody Horace Walpole declared that there was little opposition, and historians have until recently agreed with him. Actually a fairly considerable group of persons denounced the measure as unwise and dangerous. Some predicted that the Americans would resist its execution.[2] Grenville's response to such predictions was not

[2] Fred J. Ericson, "The Contemporary British Opposition to the Stamp Act, 1764–65," *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters*, XXIX (1944), 489–505.

much less violent than that attributed to "one of the ministry": "G—d d—n them, we will show them that we have power to tax them, and will tax them."[3]

The bill passed both houses by a large majority. At the same time Parliament authorized the ministry to station in America as many troops as it should see fit, extended the Mutiny Act to America, and passed a special Quartering Act, by the terms of which the colonies in which troops happened to be stationed were required to furnish for them cartage, housing, firewood, bedding, cider or rum, soap, and candles. During the war the colonies had provided these things for the troops without much quibbling. After the peace, however, instances of refusal began to multiply. Some troublesome persons had suddenly begun to argue that the Mutiny Act did not even apply to America. Justices who had complied with the law were threatened with prosecution and soldiers were even urged to desert. Gage had urged that Parliament should explicitly deal with the quartering problem before the colonists generally should decide they owed nothing to the army. Parliament responded as promptly as possible, but it was already too late.[4] Its endeavor at this time to solve the quartering problem was to be viewed by many in the colonies as part of a scheme of oppression, of which other parts were the Proclamation of October 7, 1763, and the Sugar, Currency, and Stamp Acts.

The passage of the Sugar Act, the Currency Act, and the notice given by Grenville of the impending Stamp Act inevitably aroused dissatisfaction all through the original Thirteen Colonies. Thomas Hutchinson of Massachusetts, an official of a conservative type of mind who did not question the authority of Parliament, thought the Sugar Act and the proposed Stamp Act unfair to the colonists. After all, remarked Hutchinson, the colonies had contributed generously to the war chest during the recent conflict with France and Spain. Even Governor Francis

[3] James C. Ballagh (ed.), *The Letters of Richard Henry Lee*. 2 vols. (New York, 1912), I, 13.

[4] *Gage Corr.*, I, 49, II, 24, 262–66.

Bernard of Massachusetts, no friend to American "rights," believed the Sugar Act to be highly unwise because of the injurious effect it would have on the trade of his colony. Of course, Hutchinson and Bernard were not disposed to try to prevent the execution of Parliamentary acts, however unpalatable, but others were. In May, 1764, under the inspiration of Samuel Adams, a Boston town meeting—Boston town meetings meant nothing but trouble from that time until firing began at Lexington—boldly set forth the doctrine "no taxation without representation." "If taxes are laid upon us in any shape without our having a legal representative where they are laid, are we not reduced from the character of free subjects to the miserable status of tributary slaves?" Of course, Samuel Adams, having dissipated a rather considerable property inherited from his father, could not suffer very much directly because of taxes levied by Parliament. But the public business had become his private business, and he was contending for a principle. Like most men contending solely for a principle he was distinctly a "trouble-maker." The Boston town meeting was not the only gathering which voiced strong opposition to Grenville's program. Similar complaints came from various parts of the colonies; and pamphlets, broadsides, and public letters innumerable voiced pain and anger. Nevertheless, it was not until the news came that the Stamp Act had actually been passed that the opposition to the recent conduct of Parliament blazed into flame.

When the news reached Virginia, in May, 1765, the House of Burgesses happened to be in session. There was no doubt that the members would protest. It turned out that the arguments used by the burgesses were somewhat more energetic, because of the exertions of Patrick Henry, than could have been expected. Even so, the language used by the Virginians, though precise enough in condemning taxation without representation was, in accordance with the best Virginia traditions, courteous and polite. But an erroneous report in the *Virginia Gazette* of the action taken by the burgesses stated that the Virginians had de-

clared they would not obey the act and that they would consider anyone who did as an enemy of the colony. This report, which circulated widely in the northern provinces, led many to believe that they had been much more violent in their opposition to the tax than they had actually been, and it added fuel to the flame now burning brightly. Of course, the people of Massachusetts were not far behind the Virginians. Early in June the assembly of that colony likewise denounced the tax and called for a congress of representatives of all the colonies to meet at New York in October and to convey to the government at London their deep disapproval of the conduct of His Majesty's Parliament. The assemblies of certain other colonies likewise expressed the great unhappiness and sense of mistreatment which they felt and appointed delegates to the proposed congress. Eventually representatives appeared at New York from nine colonies, not all of them chosen by the assemblies, but all of them representing a general dissatisfaction from New Hampshire to Georgia.

There can be no question that Gage approved of the act. Early in 1763, as might be expected from a military man whose own fortunes were involved, he had expressed a hope that a considerable force would be kept in service in America. He then doubted that it could be done, considering the financial condition of Great Britain, "unless means are fallen upon to oblige the provinces to bear great part of the expence which they should undoubtedly do. . . ." [5] By May of that year Gage knew what was in the wind in England and gave his approval, remarking, "America, I am informed is to pay the troops, on this continent, after the present year; this is a new measure, and of course will create much debate & murmuring, notwithstanding the propriety & even necessity of it." [6]

The resolutions, petitions, memorials, sermons, and newspaper items which condemned the Stamp Act were hardly the business of the army as long as seditious and treasonable statements were

[5] Gage to Amherst, March 21, 1763, Leather Book II, Gage MSS.

[6] Gage to Amherst, May 18, 1763, *ibid.*

avoided and as long as public order was maintained. But Gage was inevitably involved in the controversy when opponents of the act began to express themselves in words which seemed to him "seditious" and especially when they began to implement their words with deeds.

Since the tax was not to go into effect until November 1, there was ample time to agitate and to conceive plans for preventing execution of the act. The stamps, which were to be used upon bills, bonds, leases, insurance policies, legal papers of various sorts, newspapers, and playing cards, were to be sold by collectors in America. Lawyers and publishers, directly hit by the act, steadily increased their hostile propaganda. Others had ideas requiring more active conduct. A campaign first to force the agents to resign and secondly to prevent the stamps from being landed was soon under way. When the names of the collectors appointed by the crown were brought to America early in August, mob action promptly began. "Respectable" people, of course, did not soil themselves by deeds of violence. They quietly stood aside as spectators, approving and sometimes privately encouraging the efforts of the less thoughtful and more muscular elements in the population to compel the collectors to resign. On August 15 a Boston mob attacked the house of Andrew Oliver, the stamp agent for Massachusetts, destroyed his windows and his furniture, and frightened him into resigning. Ten days later Jonathan Mayhew, a zealous preacher in the same town, attacked the Stamp Act. His text was, "I would they were even cut off which trouble you!" The rioters were no doubt encouraged, and the next evening they appeared in considerable force, attacking the houses of two customs officials. Then, warmed by their exertions and by rum and wine they had found in the second of these houses, they marched bravely to the home of Thomas Hutchinson. Hutchinson and his family fled, and the rioters contented themselves with gutting his home and destroying among other things the cherished manuscripts which he had collected as the basis for a history of Massachusetts. On the twenty-seventh

Mayhew apologized to Hutchinson for the behavior of the mob, and sundry "respectable" citizens undertook to preserve order. No one tried to punish the rioters.

The example of Boston was contagious. Throughout the old colonies collectors were induced to quit, often by threats of physical mistreatment; and those persons who indiscreetly declared that the law should be obeyed were roughly handled. Two individuals in Rhode Island lost their homes in this fashion and were fortunate to find refuge upon a British man-of-war. The home of the collector for Maryland was also destroyed. Opposition to the act was most vehement in Boston and New York, although violence was not attempted in the latter town until late in the fall.

Cadwallader Colden, lieutenant governor and acting executive in the colony of New York, feared trouble as early as July 8, when he forcefully urged Gage to furnish a garrison for Fort George in New York City, then empty of troops. Colden proposed to use this force to quell popular tumults and to prevent a "Negro insurrection." (Many years before, New York *had* experienced a Negro revolt.) The customs officers in the city also requested military support. Gage promptly ordered a company of Royal Americans down from Crown Point.[7] As a result there were forty-six regulars in the little fort toward the end of August. Then Colden, moved by reports of mob action in Boston and concerned because of popular unrest in the town, which had led James McEvers, the stamp agent, to declare he would not act, hinted in conversation with Gage that more soldiers were needed in New York. By the thirty-first of that month Gage himself believed that serious trouble in the town was in the offing. In a letter to Colden, who was enjoying a temporary stay in the country, the general exhibited anger toward the local newspapers. He declared they were crammed with "treason," encouragement to revolt, and every lie that malice could invent to create a gulf between the colonies and the homeland. Apologizing for meddling

[7] *Gage Corr.*, I, 64.

in civil affairs, Gage expressed a hope that legal action could be taken against the printers and the authors of such writings. Gage also urged Colden, if he really intended to ask for additional troops, to give notice as soon as possible. The troops were scattered all over the eastern half of the continent, and time would be needed to move them. He reminded Colden that they could not be used against mobs except under the command of a civil officer—that he himself had no authority to order the troops to act against civilians, except in case of rebellion. Gage believed that in a "country of liberty" the military was rightly subject to the civil power, with the exception noted, of course.[8]

Since all royal governors in the colonies were forbidden by their instructions from London to call for military aid without the consent of their councils, Colden promptly returned to town and summoned his advisers. When a sufficient number finally appeared, Colden described the situation, suggesting that the general should be asked to order a full battalion into the town. Energetic and disposed to use the whip, Colden argued that the presence of such a force, added to the garrison in the fort, would overawe would-be rioters. However, two meetings of the council, on September 7 and 9, brought no result, for the councilors contended that it was wiser to show faith in the people than to create distrust by calling in the military. Nor was it proper, in their opinion, to take action against those who were so enthusiastically expressing in print their dislike of the Stamp Act and its sponsors.

Even before Colden reached town Gage was doing what he could (exclusive of ordering additional troops into town from the posts) to prepare for trouble by having part of the large store of supplies and artillery in the town placed within the fort. On September 5 he ordered the fort placed in a posture for defense. During the next three days officers and men labored frantically on the works, in the midst of a heat wave. Soon, especially since two companies of artillery had come from England at the very

[8] Gage to Cadwallader Colden, Aug. 31, 1765, Gage MSS.

moment when most desired, the fort was well equipped for defense and manned by 130 men.[9]

Colden was by no means the only official to whom Gage offered the assistance of the military arm at this time. After the riot in Boston on August 26 Bernard had desired to call for help from the army and navy; but his council had refused its consent, arguing that 120 provincial troops stationed on Castle Island in the bay and H.M.S. *Coventry,* then in the harbor, were sufficient to keep the peace. Bernard accordingly informed the general that he could not be responsible for the maintenance of order in Massachusetts. On September 6 Gage responded by sending William Shirreff to Boston to investigate the situation there and to tell Bernard that necessary arrangements were being made to transfer one hundred infantrymen and thirty artillerists from Halifax to Castle William. If Bernard wished the services of these men, all he had to do was to say so to the captain of H.M.S. *Tryal,* which would call at Boston on its way from New York to Halifax.[10] Bernard, however, did not take advantage of this offer. He reported that tempers were cooling in Massachusetts; that such a small force would probably be worse than none; and that he planned to convoke the provincial assembly with the idea of placing upon it the responsibility for preserving public tranquillity when the stamps should arrive.[11]

Ten days after he sent Shirreff to Massachusetts, Gage hurried off a letter to Governor Horatio Sharpe of Maryland. Sharpe had informed Gage that he would be unable to protect the stamps when they should arrive, unless he had military support. Gage authorized him to order one hundred regulars from Fort Pitt to Annapolis and suggested that the stamps would be safest on board ship in the harbor, especially since a man-of-war would

[9] O'Callaghan (ed.), *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York . . . ,* VII, 98–99; *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1881* (New York, 1882), 327–28.

[10] Governor Francis Bernard to Gage, Aug. 29, 1765, and enclosures, Gage to Bernard, Sept. 6, 1765, Gage MSS.

[11] Bernard to Gage, Sept. 13, 1765, *ibid.*

probably appear on the Maryland coast.[12] However, Sharpe made no use of the power entrusted to him by the general. At the same time, learning that Governor William Franklin of New Jersey was debating with himself whether he should ask for troops to defend the stamps in his province, Gage offered to furnish Franklin one hundred men, although the governor had believed sixty would be sufficient. But Franklin too was unable to call in the military, even if he had really desired to do it, for his council expressed an opinion that the troops would not be needed in New Jersey. On the whole, Franklin rather agreed with this opinion. He suggested to Gage that their services might be much more useful in New York.[13]

Although Gage was offering in the late summer of 1765 to furnish military assistance whenever and wherever it was asked by civil officials, he was greatly worried by the state of affairs in America. The forces at his disposal were not large, and most of the army was located so far from the scenes of disturbance that months would be required to bring any large part of it into the old seaboard colonies. Moreover, the troops were generally needed where they were and could be transferred only at the risk of trouble in Canada, in the West, and in the Floridas. Still, Gage was afraid that an armed conflict could not be avoided. He believed that the Americans were determined to recognize no authority in the British Parliament to tax them, and that Parliament would not back down before the American propagandists and rioters.[14] And after all, he was responsible for the security of the empire in America. If conflict could not be avoided, a few hundred additional troops in strategic locations might be of supreme value. New York City was of some importance strategically, and there were large quantities of unprotected military equipment there. He therefore finally decided to order 200 men

[12] Gage to Governor Horatio Sharpe, Sept. 16, 1765, *ibid.*

[13] Gage to Governor William Franklin, Sept. 16, 1765, Franklin to Gage, Sept. 25, 1765, *ibid.*

[14] Gage to James Murray, Sept. 7, 1765, *ibid.*; Gage to William Johnson, Sept. 30, 1765, *Johnson Papers*, IV, 851–52.

brought from western and northern New York to Albany and another 100 men from Fort Pitt to Lancaster. From Albany and Lancaster these men could be brought quickly to Manhattan. By mid-December he had about 500 regulars to maintain the rights of Parliament and the crown in the settled parts of the middle colonies.[15]

Before these reinforcements reached Albany and Lancaster the Stamp Act Congress was held at New York and also a little performance in the way of rioting which threatened for a time to end in open rebellion. The Congress assembled on October 7 and continued its deliberations until October 25. Those who composed it, as Gage reported, were "of various characters and opinions, but it's to be feared in general, that the spirit of democracy, is strong amongst them." [16] Gage kept an anxious eye upon the delegates and no doubt did what he could to prevent them from uniting in strenuous opposition to the authority of Parliament. He entertained at dinner Timothy Ruggles, Oliver Partridge, and James Otis, the representatives of Massachusetts,[17] and probably not without result. It is to be suspected that he also worked upon William Bayard, delegate for New York and Mrs. Gage's cousin. Ruggles, a conservative and the presiding officer of the Congress, fought for moderate measures throughout its deliberations and actually refused in the end to give his approval to the Declaration of Rights, the Petition to the King, and the Memorial to both Houses of Parliament which it adopted, although the language used in these documents was much more temperate than that commonly employed by the complaining Americans. However, if the tone of these loftily phrased papers was restrained, the sentiments they expressed were not of a nature to induce most British politicians to smile with satisfaction. The documents condemned the use of admiralty courts in enforcing revenue laws in America, described the

[15] *Gage Corr.*, I, 77.
[16] *Ibid.*, 69.
[17] Henry J. Peet (ed.), *Chaumiere Papers, Containing Matters of Interest to the Descendants of David Meade* . . . (Chicago, 1883), 15.

Sugar Act as injurious to trade, and declared the Stamp Act "unconstitutional." Internal taxation, it was argued, could not be levied upon British citizens except by their own representatives. The Americans were not represented in Parliament, could not be so represented, and could therefore be subjected to internal taxation only by their own assemblies. These contentions, because they expressed the beliefs of delegates from so many colonies, especially when taken with reports of mob action from New Hampshire to South Carolina, rather surprised people in London, especially since few persons there had really expected serious opposition to the Stamp Act.

Hardly had the Congress broken up when the Anglo-American dispute in New York passed from words to violence. On October 12 Gage believed that the Stamp Act might be put into effect in several of the colonies and that once enforced in some provinces it would soon be accepted in the others.[18] Probably Gage hoped that Colden, who seemed determined to do his duty, would be able to force the use of the stamps in New York. If so, Gage was sadly deceived. On October 23 a consignment of the long-awaited stamps arrived in the harbor, and Colden was put to the test. Colden had the ship *Edward,* which had conveyed the stamps, brought under the batteries of Fort George with several men-of-war in the port serving as escorts. Then he asked his council for advice. Those who appeared at his call hesitated to take any action whatever. However, the *Edward* carried goods consigned to various merchants, and delay in unloading these goods might have brought on suits for damages. The council, therefore, finally suggested that the vessel be unloaded. No civilian would furnish the small craft needed to do the job, and Colden had to call upon the naval officers for help. Finally, through their efforts, most of the stamps were landed and placed within the fort. Colden then thought he had done enough. On October 26 his son David, whom he had appointed temporary collector in place of McEvers, applied to the commissioners in

[18] *Gage Corr.,* I, 70.

London who were entrusted with the task of executing the act for a permanent appointment. But Colden intended to do nothing more. He hoped that the problem of the stamps could be set aside until Sir Henry Moore, recently appointed governor of the colony and known to be en route to America, should appear on the scene.

Excitement ran high in New York when it was learned that the stamps had been landed. Many townsfolk exhibited a firm determination to prevent the use of the stamps, and crowds of sailors and people from the vicinity came in to assist them. When, on October 31, Colden, as required by law, took an oath to do his best to enforce the Stamp Act, popular dissatisfaction with his conduct rapidly increased. The same evening a great meeting of the citizens was held at the King's Arms tavern, under the very eyes of the general. Two hundred merchants signed resolutions condemning the tax. Moreover, they promised to boycott all British goods, a measure soon copied in various parts of the colonies, since it was hoped that British manufacturers and merchants, suffering financial losses, would bring pressure upon Parliament to repeal the detested law. Also a committee of correspondence to co-operate with the citizens of other ports and a committee of vigilance to watch over the situation in the town were appointed.

On the following day, November 1, the day appointed for the act to go into effect, placards appeared everywhere throughout the town threatening all persons who should use the stamps with swift punishment. But this was merely the prelude. In the evening a mob paraded the streets, carrying a scaffold and effigies of Colden and the devil. The mob at length approached the walls of the fort and even knocked at its gate, demanding that the stamps be given up for destruction. Neither the military nor Colden, who had taken refuge within it, gave any answer. The rioters then broke into the lieutenant governor's coach house, carried off his coach and sleigh, and renewed their procession. Finally they returned and built a huge bonfire within one hundred yards

of the fort, where they burnt the effigies and carriages amid general cursing of the name of Colden. A few of the rioters carried clubs and some threw stones into the fort, but there was silence within the walls. Meanwhile, a band of "volunteers" sacked the house of Major Thomas James of the Royal Artillery, who had helped to prepare the fort against assault and who had urged that the Stamp Act be crammed down American throats at sword's point. Finally, out of sheer weariness, the rioters went home. While the mob joyously consigned him to perdition, Colden was safe but fuming within the fort. The troops remained quiet, but stood ready at battle stations, prepared if necessary to defend themselves. Colden, to his credit, displayed no inclination to precipitate a conflict. Gage, more prudent than Colden, apparently remained in his home, as if an assault upon the fort were unthinkable. By doing so he made it difficult for the opponents of the Stamp Act to bring a charge of tyranny against him and the army.

The morning of November 2 did not bring peace and tranquillity. To allay public unrest Colden announced that he would take no steps toward putting the stamps into use. But the townsfolk were not satisfied. His council, fearing that an armed struggle would result unless the mob was placated, urged him to deprive the mob of any excuse for attacking the fort by placing the stamps on board one of the warships in the harbor. Colden agreed, but Captain Archibald Kennedy, the senior naval officer in the port and commander of the *Coventry*, refused to receive them. Kennedy had valuable property in the town and feared that it would be destroyed if he complied. After much importuning, Kennedy finally agreed. Then Colden, disgusted with Kennedy, refused to send them. At this point Gage intervened. Gage feared that the continued presence of the stamps in the fort would excite the populace to an attack upon it. Technically, Colden could not order the troops to fire because only a magistrate had the power to use troops against rioters, but he might eventually be forced to issue the order, in sheer self-defense. The

garrison could defend itself, Gage believed. However, gunfire from the fort would, in his opinion, be the signal for an insurrection. The rioters were numerous and determined, there were 14,000 small arms and other military equipment belonging to the army outside the fort, which could easily be seized, and there were no regulars nearer than Albany to support the garrison. After all, since the stamps were not to be used, what difference would it make whether they were kept in the fort or on board a warship? Gage conveyed these sentiments to Colden, and Colden changed his mind again, agreeing to turn over the stamps to Captain Kennedy. Meanwhile, however, Kennedy had *again* changed *his* mind. On November 5 he finally gave a positive refusal to accept them.

On the previous day a number of prominent citizens and merchants who had tacitly encouraged rioting decided that the situation was too serious to permit further disorders. They had published a proclamation declaring that they were satisfied with Colden's promise not to try to use the stamps and that they would resist any attempt to create public uproar. But the news of Kennedy's refusal to accept the stamps again aroused the populace to fury. The "solid citizens," in fear of insurrection, found a way to dispose of the stamps. The mayor and the city council met hurriedly and offered to take the stamps into their custody and to be financially responsible for them in case of their loss or destruction. Colden realized that acceptance of the offer of the city council would prevent bloodshed, and his advisers urged him to accept it. However, the lieutenant governor hesitated, for he might be reprimanded by his superiors in London for doing so. Finally he hinted to members of the city council that he would turn the stamps over to the city officials if Gage gave his approval to that step. Leading citizens immediately urged Gage to express a favorable opinion. Gage, however, refused even to offer any advice unless it was requested directly by Colden, for he had no authority to meddle in civil affairs and had no wish to be responsible for the outcome. At length, after a long and harassing

day for the "solid citizens," Colden sent by William Bayard a letter to Gage indicating that he and his council had decided tentatively to turn over the stamps and asking for the general's opinion. Gage immediately responded that he agreed with Colden and the council and urged quick action. The papers were promptly delivered, and all was soon quiet.[19]

The events of November 1 to November 5, as Gage reported to England, undoubtedly made many of the more conservative New Yorkers regret their long campaign against the Stamp Act. He predicted that "many will soon wish to take the stamps, tho' all afraid to be the first." [20] But if the wealthy and more timid folk began to draw back, the mechanics, laborers, and sailors, who lost their employment because of the cessation of business resulting from the boycott on British goods and the unwillingness of employers to use the stamps, continued their agitation. On November 13 Sir Henry Moore, a gentleman who believed that a liberal and generous attitude on his part would go far toward preventing trouble, landed, assumed office, and threw open the fort gate. Moore pooh-poohed Colden's fears of civil disturbance, and the stubborn old Scot retired to his country home in high dudgeon. Moore, however, soon discovered that a conciliatory attitude did not assure either public tranquillity or American cooperation. Early in December, at the request of Gage, he asked the provincial assembly to provide housing and other necessaries as required by the Quartering Act for the two hundred men Gage had stationed at Albany and for such others as might travel through the colony. Although Gage sent a confidential agent to several members of that body to explain that there was no desire on his part or on the part of the British government to tyrannize in this matter and that everything possible would be done to make the burden easy, even to the point of amending the act so as to conform to any constitutional scruples which the

[19] On Gage's part in these events see *ibid.*, 70–71, 72–73; Gage to Colden, Nov. 5, 1765, Gage to Ralph Burton, Nov. 5, 1765, address of mayor and aldermen of New York to Gage, Nov. 11, 1765, Gage MSS.

[20] *Gage Corr.*, I, 73.

members might hold, the assembly evaded the request.[21] A request from Gage that the magistrates at Albany care for the needs of the men met similar treatment.[22] Moreover, Manhattan continued to be disturbed. Merchants tried to ship goods without clearances stamped in accordance with the law, and Moore stopped them by using war vessels. In mid-December there was danger that a mob would try to destroy the stamps in the care of the corporation, and only prompt action by the magistrates averted it. A month later an armed mob actually boarded a vessel which had brought in another supply of stamps, seized the papers, and burnt them publicly in the town. Moore had not expected anything like that. He, too, began to meditate asking for military and naval assistance.[23] Still another month—after the Naval Officer of New York had been forced by a mob to express his sorrow publicly for demanding stamped clearance papers from a merchant—and Moore took a more drastic course than Colden had ever dared to follow. Gage had long hesitated to bring any considerable number of troops into the settled areas for fear of incurring charges of military tyranny. By January, however, he was searching for "a legal pretence to collect all the force I could, into one body; which might check in some measure the audacious threats of taking arms, and in case of extremity enable the King's servants, and such as are friends to government, to make a respectable opposition." [24] With many towns and the Sons of Liberty avowing that they would fight if attempts to enforce the Stamp Act were made, and in view of the frequent lawless outbreaks in New York, it is hard to deny that Gage had reasons for preparing for trouble. Certainly Moore, who had

[21] *Ibid.*, I, 79, II, 329.

[22] Colonel John Bradstreet to Gage, Jan. 26, 1766, and enclosure, Gage MSS.

[23] O'Callaghan (ed.), *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York . . .*, VII, 805–806. Moore may have been eager to preserve tranquillity at the beginning of his governorship for economic reasons. It was rumored in New York in 1766 that he obtained his appointment by paying a bribe of £6,000 to the Earl of Halifax, president of the Board of Trade, Samuel Wharton to William Franklin, Dec. 27, 1766, Franklin Papers, American Philosophical Society.

[24] *Gage Corr.*, I, 82, II, 334.

been so sedulous in his attempts to please, came to agree with him. In February Gage determined to bring a considerable force into Albany as soon as the melting snows would permit; and Moore, although his instructions forbade him to ask for aid from the military without the consent of his council (which he could not obtain), privately gave his approval to the step, and undertook to defend it to the cabinet.[25]

By evacuating small posts in the interior of New York and Pennsylvania and by drawing off a regiment from the garrison in the province of Quebec, Gage planned to concentrate about 1,500 men in the neighborhood of New York.[26] But many of these men could not arrive until late in May, and Gage remained uneasy as long as there was no definite news from London regarding the action which the cabinet and Parliament would take to deal with the American crisis. In March he regarded the situation as still "critical." On the twenty-fourth he actually made arrangements to place the military equipment so long unprotected in the king's storehouses at New York on board a warship in the harbor.[27] Then came the tidings that the obnoxious act would be repealed, and Gage and all America relaxed. On May 6 Major James, who had been sent to England by Gage to report on the riot of November and to get for himself what compensation he could, landed, informing the whole population that the repeal was actually carried. There was general rejoicing. On June 4 Gage, with the governor, various civil and military officers, and members of the clergy, dined at the King's Arms to honor his sovereign. The same day, with Moore's permission, the Sons of Liberty dedicated a Liberty Pole to that most incongruous trio, George III, William Pitt, and Liberty.

It would hardly be accurate to say that Gage was satisfied with the outcome. Ever since the Peace of Paris he had favored the

[25] *Ibid.*, I, 84; O'Callaghan (ed.), *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York . . .*, VII, 810–11.

[26] *Gage Corr.*, I, 87, 90.

[27] Gage to William Johnson, March 3, 1766, Gage to Captain Henry St. John, March 24, 1766, Captain St. John to Gage, March 25, 1766, Gage MSS.

idea of taxing the colonies to support the army, and he had done what he could toward the enforcement of the Stamp Act. Writing to Governor James Wright of Georgia at the end of April, 1766, he expressed regret that no civil officer had asked his aid in time so that he could bring in troops to meet the crisis. ". . .[But it is to be hoped the times will change. And that other measures will be soon taken to defend the powers of government." [28] Nor was the home government entirely satisfied with the military situation in America. Gage was ordered in May to drop his plan of concentrating a large force near Manhattan; at the same time, however, the ministry secretly added a regiment to the army in America.[29]

[28] Gage to Governor James Wright, April 30, 1766, *ibid.*

[29] *Gage Corr.*, I, 37–38; Barrington to Gage, May 9, 1766 (Private), May 10, 1766, Gage MSS.

CHAPTER VIII

The Western Problem

IF ONE WERE to judge merely from the volume of words which Thomas Gage devoted to the larger problems of empire during the two years following the repeal of the Stamp Act, one might conclude that his primary interest, after a brief and most unwelcome interlude, was once more the vast territories between the Gulf of Mexico and the Great Lakes which had been acquired from France and Spain. Actually, although he did not write very much during this period about the problem of maintaining British authority in the older colonies, he continued to believe that *that* was his biggest job. Nevertheless, the new possessions were most important in themselves, and the policies pursued in regard to them inevitably had an effect, for various reasons, upon the more fundamental question of Anglo-American relations.

After 1763 British politicians were not eager for further expansion in America, although they would certainly have tried to take New Orleans if a new war had broken out with the Bourbons. Rather, pretty well satisfied with what they had, they sought to assure the safety of their newly acquired territories. They posed for themselves three questions regarding those territories: How can they be protected against the French and Spanish? What can be done to preserve peace and friendship with the Indians

within the area? How can the new possessions be made profitable to the empire? If they had assessed correctly the precarious state of British power in the Old Thirteen Colonies—which, of course, the great majority of them did not—they might well have asked themselves a fourth question: What can we do regarding the new territories which will buttress our hold on the older ones? "Realistic" politicians would have used the fertile lands beyond the Alleghenies and the Indians who lived upon them to teach the Americans the value of their connection with Britain. Until 1774, however, almost all British leaders were far more concerned with the possibility that the Bourbons would renew the struggle so recently halted than with the idea that the British colonists might actually strike for independence. It is likely that Gage himself, in spite of the fact that he was much more aware of the temper of the Americans than his superiors, was nearly as much worried by the crisis in Anglo-Spanish relations caused by the Falkland Islands quarrel in 1770 as by any difficulties between Britain and her colonists before the passage of the Coercive Acts of 1774.

As it happened, the ministry in which Grenville played so prominent a role, although its members undoubtedly prided themselves upon their knowledge of men, lacked the foresight, the cunning, and the unscrupulousness needed to formulate and execute a Machiavellian policy. In fact, no London politician, except, perhaps, the Earl of Shelburne, saw clearly before 1774 that it was possible to burden the Americans so heavily with problems in the interior of the continent that they could give neither their whole interest nor their entire strength to the defense of the privileges which they claimed within the empire.

There was no feeling among British politicians in 1763 that the task of defending the new territories should be handled by the colonists. They felt that it was one which should be dealt with by the imperial government, especially since they regarded those possessions as accessions to the empire as a whole rather than as additions to the older colonies. It was, to be sure, a problem

which could be more easily met by one central government than by many colonial governments, especially since the London people controlled the navy, upon which would fall the task of preventing major assaults from Europe. They believed, however, that it was the duty of the colonists to help with the defense, not only by quartering the regulars and supporting them through the payment of taxes, but also by furnishing provincial troops to assist the regulars in the field. They wished to keep in America enough regulars to make impossible a sudden conquest of any part of the new territories by the French, Spanish, and Indians, or by any combination thereof. In the event of a protracted war, of course, they would procure reinforcements in England and in the older colonies and would make full use of British naval power. No certain evidence that they intended at that time to use the regulars to maintain their authority over the American colonists has been discovered, although General Amherst believed they would be useful for that purpose also.

British politicians were pretty generally agreed, early in 1763, upon keeping an army in America and upon its size—10,000 men. However, when Amherst was asked how large a force he thought necessary, he suggested that about 7,500 men, exclusive of artillerymen, would be sufficient for defense not only against the French, Spanish, and Indians, but also to guard "against any disobedience or disaffection amongst the inhabitants of the maritime provinces, who already begin to entertain some extraordinary opinions, concerning their relation to and dependance on their Mother Country." [1] In August of that year Amherst had available for service only eleven regiments.[2] Two years later, because the army had been increased in order to crush the Indian uprising, Gage had at his disposal fifteen field regiments and one of artillery. This establishment, which seemed to meet the approval of almost everyone in London concerned until 1774, remained substantially unaltered until that year. Since a regiment

[1] Clarence W. Alvord and Clarence E. Carter (eds.), *The Critical Period, 1763–1765, Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library,* X (1915), 5–11.

[2] *Ibid.,* 14–17.

was supposed to contain 500 men, a force of 8,000 men was theoretically on duty in America during those nine years. But the American regiments actually had nine companies rather than the ten which they possessed on paper. In addition, there were constant heavy losses because of desertion, discharge, and death. Moreover, the regiments were steadily rotated in service by the War Office after 1763, and the officers of those in America avoided refilling the ranks until they should be transferred to Great Britain, where recruits of higher quality could be obtained.[3] Consequently there was usually a total of about 5,000 men available for service in America, and a large part of these was commonly unfit for duty. Early in 1771, when Gage was attempting to gather a force for a projected attack on New Orleans, he calculated that six regiments and a small train of artillery would furnish no more than 2,000 men, both sick and well.[4]

Although there was general agreement among British politicians regarding the size of the army in America after 1763, there was none regarding its disposition. That army was responsible for the safety of all the eastern half of North America and the Bahamas and Bermuda as well. That it was impossible to garrison effectively such vast territories was obvious to all. It was necessary to place the army in such a fashion as to cover the most vital spots, to protect against the greatest dangers, and to permit the gathering of sizable forces in case of emergency. But what were the most vital spots? where were the greatest dangers? and where should the troops have their rendezvous in an emergency?

The first London official to try to answer these questions was Gage's friend Barrington. In October, 1765, after pumping Colonel James Robertson for information, the secretary at war wrote the general a "private" letter asking Gage's opinion regarding these problems. He suggested that it was unnecessary and expensive to keep any large part of the troops west of the Alleghenies, in view of the fact that the Proclamation of 1763 prohibited settlement in the "deserts" of the West, and that the bulk

[3] *Gage Corr.*, II, 330. [4] *Ibid.*, I, 295.

of the army should be concentrated on the eastern seaboard, where it could be easily relieved and supported. He promised to use any information which Gage might give with discretion so that no harm would come to the general.[5] Obviously Barrington was already pretty well convinced by the troubles over the Stamp Act that the major menace to the empire in America lay in the danger that the American colonists would try to free themselves from subservience to the British Parliament. In the winter of 1765 Gage responded, but rather cautiously. He mentioned the fact that he was then in the process of abandoning certain small posts in upper New York and Pennsylvania and of bringing almost three regiments to the neighborhood of New York, but he would not recommend positively that the bulk of the regulars be stationed near the seacoast. He pointed out that the many interior forts in British hands stretching from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the lower Mississippi were useful for keeping the Indians in subjection and could be employed to prevent traders from Louisiana from dealing with the tribes east of the Mississippi, and also that they served as centers of the commerce carried on by the British with the savages. By confining the activities of the British traders as much as possible to the forts, he had brought them under the supervision of the military officers and officials of the Indian departments, and he believed that it was possible in this fashion to check the licentiousness and greed of the traders, whose conduct had been at least partly responsible for the enmity shown toward the British by the Indians in the recent conflicts. On the other hand, he indicated that it was not indispensable to keep up the forts in the interior because of Indian relations and that they would certainly be valueless in the event of French or Spanish aggression.

Considering the present temper of almost all the provinces, their scandalous behavior and ingratitude, their insolence to the whole legislature of Great Britain, and unwillingness to contribute their quota towards the exigencies of the state, tho' for their own use and

[5] Barrington to Gage, Oct. 10, 1765 (Private), Gage MSS.

benefit; was it not that Great Britain is a gainer by the fur trade, and possibly the cry of the merchants, shou'd inconvenience arise from abandoning the forts; there wou'd be no difficulty in deciding at once that the forts shou'd be abandoned, and the provinces left to manage their trade, counteract the French, and defend their frontiers as well as they could, and as they have ever done since they were first settled, at their own risque and expence.[6]

On May 8, 1766, after receiving Gage's advice and that of Sir William Johnson, Barrington forwarded to the general a plan for stationing the army in America and asked for comments upon it. Except for a few posts on the Great Lakes and possibly Forts Chartres and Augusta (in Georgia) Barrington wanted every fort in the interior of the continent promptly abandoned. He proposed that the Indian traders be allowed to carry on their business under the supervision of royal officials at a few spots on the frontiers, and also that the temporary restriction on western expansion laid down in the Proclamation of 1763 be made permanent. He urged that garrisons be continued at Pensacola and in the province of Quebec, but that the major part of the army be stationed at Halifax and St. Augustine. In this fashion there would be protection not only against troubles with the French in Canada and the Spanish on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico but also for British authority in the old settled colonies. Barrington did not wish to place troops in the Old Thirteen because he did not desire to provoke them unnecessarily. Nevertheless, said he, "I am persuaded a good corps of troops always in readiness within a few days sail of those colonies would produce the same effect on their minds as if they were on the spot. And probably the insolence of their conduct last year proceeded from a knowledge that it was impossible to assemble such a force as might constrain them to duty & obedience." [7]

Just one day after entrusting his plan to the American mails, Barrington also sent confidential orders from the cabinet to Gage

[6] *Gage Corr.*, II, 318–24.

[7] Barrington to Cage, May 8, 1766 (Private), Cage MSS.; Barrington's plan, Alvord and Carter (eds.), *The New Régime, 1765–1767, Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library*, XI, 234–43.

permitting an immediate increase in the American establishment to seventeen regiments.[8] But the cabinet had by no means adopted Barrington's ideas. Nor did it entirely approve Gage's idea of concentrating part of his troops in the middle colonies. On May 20 Sir Henry Conway, secretary of state for the southern department, while conceding that Gage knew the situation in the colonies better than himself, nevertheless hinted that the troops which Gage intended to station in the vicinity of New York should be removed to Quebec and Nova Scotia in order to avoid inflaming the colonists.[9] However, he submitted this matter, as well as the advisability of keeping an extra regiment in America, to Gage's discretion. Gage sent home the extra regiment, but took upon himself the responsibility of stationing one regiment each in the settled parts of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, an arrangement which was approved by the Earl of Shelburne, who took over the southern department in August, 1766.[10]

Even before Barrington's plan was sent to America, Gage forwarded to his friend—at Barrington's urgent request for more definite opinions [11]—further and more precise remarks upon the problem of locating the troops. The fundamental military necessity, Gage suggested, was to maintain substantial forces at New York and Philadelphia. These troops could guard the vast stores of equipment then in New York City (Gage wanted to place these stores in a fort to be erected on Governor's Island); and they could easily be sent in case of need to Canada by way of the Hudson–Lake Champlain route and to the Ohio Valley by way of Forbes's Road. Above all, the presence of considerable bodies of regulars in these cities would neither *"hurt the loyalty of the Americans,"* nor *"diminish the submission which they owe to the legislative acts of the Mother Country,"* nor *"lessen their*

[8] Barrington to Gage, May 9, 1766 (Private), Gage MSS.

[9] *Gage Corr.*, II, 37–38; Barrington to Gage, Sept. 12, 1765 (Private), Gage MSS.

[10] *Gage Corr.*, I, 107–108, II, 47, 409–10.

[11] Barrington to Gage, Feb. 7, 1766 (Private), Gage MSS.

dependance upon her governmt." Of almost equal importance in Gage's view was the maintenance of four regiments in the province of Quebec and of at least one fort to guard the Hudson–Lake Champlain passageway. If Britain firmly held that passageway, New York, and Quebec, she could introduce troops at either town and could shut off New England from the middle and southern colonies. Gage also desired to keep a sizable body of regulars at Halifax—the admiral commanding the British naval squadron on the North American station had his headquarters there, and it was a short sail from Halifax to Boston.

What about the troops and forts beyond the Alleghenies? That depends, said the general. Some of the forts are useless in any case and should be abandoned. Others serve substantial military purposes, while still others are valuable only as centers of the Indian trade and as bases for managing Indian relations. If Great Britain is determined to control Indian diplomacy, to encourage and regulate the Indian trade, and to protect the frontiers of the colonies, many of the posts must be retained and garrisoned. If, however, Great Britain should decide to ease herself of a financial burden and to please the Americans by abandoning the management of Indian affairs to the colonies, then all troops should be withdrawn east of the mountains. But Britain should neither abandon the posts nor withdraw the troops from the West unless she was absolutely determined to let the colonies assume the responsibility for defending their frontiers as well as the power to control Indian relations. The colonial governments had always grossly mismanaged the Indian problem and they would certainly permit and even encourage cheating, defrauding, and maltreating the savages until disastrous wars would break out between red men and white men. The king's soldiers, supported by the crown, must not be forced to win back the posts and to wage war against the savages because of the misconduct and neglect of the colonies. If all the troops were withdrawn from the West, where should they go? Some of them, Gage argued, might be very useful in Boston, which had no garrison and *which should*

always be occupied by at least two regiments. Although Gage did not say so, a policy of general withdrawal had other virtues: accusations by Americans that the British government was seeking to prevent them from occupying the western Allegheny watershed would be deprived of most of their force, and conflict between the Americans and the red men would make the former more appreciative of the Mother Country.

On the whole, although he would have wished to place a good part of the troops in Massachusetts and the middle colonies rather than to put almost all of them in Nova Scotia and East Florida, it is certain that Gage regarded Barrington's idea of withdrawal from the West with favor. He did not definitely commit himself even in his private correspondence with Barrington until October, 1767, when he wrote: "I sincerely wish something was fixed for the troops and I am of opinion if you have many more rubs with the colonies which you certainly will have as often as you have anything to vote concerning them, it will at length be judged best to put your Lordship's plan in direction." [12] However, Barrington was aware as early as September, 1766, that Gage preferred his proposals to existing arrangements. At that time he informed Gage that William Pitt, titular head of the cabinet after August, and the Earl of Shelburne also favored his plan.[13] But try as he would, Barrington was unable to persuade the cabinet to take any action upon it. Pitt was so badly crippled with gout that he was unable to attend to business. A cabinet meeting without Pitt finally considered the matter in April, 1767. No decision could be reached in his absence, especially since Amherst, who was invited to attend, opposed Barrington's scheme.[14] It was not until October, 1767, that the question was finally referred by the Earl of Shelburne to the Board of Trade for study and recommendations for action; and it was not until January of the following year that affairs really began to move,

[12] Gage to Barrington, Oct. 10, 1767 (Private), *ibid.*

[13] Barrington to Gage, Sept. 12, 1766 (Private), *ibid.*

[14] Barrington to Gage, April 10, 1767 (Private), *ibid.*

when American business was entrusted to a new secretary of state for the colonies, the Earl of Hillsborough, son of the gentleman whose supposed friendship with Gage's mother had so annoyed the first Viscount Gage.[15] The failure of the cabinet to do anything about Barrington's proposals until 1768 is not to be explained by a lack of interest on the part of Shelburne. Shelburne was interested, all right, but he was a bit of a research man, and he wanted further information regarding American affairs as a whole before taking any decisive steps.

When the cabinet dallied after 1765 with the numerous problems arising from possession of the West, royal officials in America had to meet them as best they could. The crushing of Pontiac's rebellion and the establishment of British garrisons on the Mississippi did not by any means assure peace among the Indians. The redskins continued to be uneasy throughout the whole interior. The Shawnees, Delawares, Iroquois, and other tribes were exasperated by the formation of white settlements upon lands which the Indians considered their own, especially in the valley of the Monongahela just above Fort Pitt. That these settlements were expressly forbidden by the Proclamation of 1763 hardly soothed their discontent. In similar fashion the Cherokees were disturbed by the advance of pioneer habitations in the Carolinas, and the Creeks were irritated because of intrusions into their lands committed by the people of Georgia and the Floridas. Nor were the savages restless merely because of encroachments upon their hunting grounds. The collapse of an attempt by John Stuart in 1765 to regulate the southern Indian trade through co-operation between himself and the southern governors and the failure of Gage's plan of the same year to regulate the fur trade in the North through the military officers brought renewed disorder in the Indian commerce. The Indians hardly had laid down their arms before the traders began to practice upon them the time-honored tricks which the red men

[15] Barrington to Gage, July 6, 1767 (Private), Dec. 12, 1767 (Private), Jan. 8, 1768 (Private), *ibid.*

so greatly resented. One Indian claimed that he and his brethren were cheated even in the matter of breechclouts—that the cloth was cut too skimpily. Relations with the Indians were disturbed still further by the activities of French traders who entered British territory from Louisiana in order to do business with their former clients, and by wars among various tribes, notably a Cherokee-Iroquois feud which entered upon an acute phase in 1763 and a Creek-Choctaw conflict which began in the spring of 1766. Also, the usual vicious competition between traders from the several colonies was resurrected, with all the scandal resulting from it.

John Stuart, Sir William Johnson, and Gage all found reason to be concerned about the status of Indian affairs in 1765 and thereafter. After returning to Charleston from West Florida in the summer of 1765, Stuart did everything within his power to ward off an Anglo-Indian war. Though without specific authorization from London he had been trying to placate the southern tribes by negotiating between them and the neighboring colonies boundary lines that would assure to the savages the possession and use of their lands. These boundaries, through which he hoped to execute the provision of the Proclamation of 1763 that reserved for the Indians the territories they claimed, were laid down in treaties signed by the southern governors, the interested Indians, and Stuart himself. Stuart continued his efforts in this direction. At the end of 1767 lines between the whites of East Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas on the one hand and the Creeks, Catawbas, and Cherokees on the other were completed on paper. By that time those of the Carolinas were actually surveyed and marked. To assure the safety of the southern colonies Stuart also actively encouraged the Creeks and Choctaws to continue their war, on the principle that Indians *would* fight and that it was better that they fight each other rather than the British. Through his aides, Charles Stuart and Elias Legardere, he quietly furnished inflammatory advice, powder, and lead to both sides. British civil and military officers in West Florida like Gov-

ernor George Johnstone and Lieutenant Colonel William Tayler co-operated with him. In order to carry on effectively this policy of *divide et impera* Tayler even arranged for the temporary reoccupation of Fort Tombigbee on the river of the same name, at Stuart's urging, because that post was the best spot from which to hand out insidious propaganda and ammunition. These machinations were most successful. *Divide et impera* was also the policy followed by Stuart for many months in regard to the war between the Cherokees and the Iroquois. In 1767, convinced that no harm to the British would result from the cessation of that conflict, he finally joined with Johnson in opening negotiations which brought peace to the contestants in 1768. Stuart also gave his moral support to Johnstone and Tayler when they established British garrisons at Forts Bute and Panmure on the lower Mississippi in order to prevent Louisiana traders from trespassing on British territory. But if Stuart enjoyed considerable success in arranging Indian boundaries and in Indian diplomacy he could not see any way in which he could prevent disorders in the trade until he received some specific authority from England.

Johnson also tried to negotiate a boundary line between the tribes under his jurisdiction and the northern colonies. Johnson was apparently not so much concerned as Stuart with maintaining peace on the frontier, for he was disposed to favor land speculators—he was himself a major speculator in land—by persuading the Indians to accept a line as far to the west as possible. However, unlike Stuart, he did not feel free to make any formal agreements with the northern Indians regarding a line until he had obtained permission from London. Oddly enough, again unlike Stuart, he believed that he should and could exercise authority over the trade in his district. In the winter of 1765–66 he plagued Gage constantly with appeals to be permitted to employ a number of assistants who would be stationed at the forts in the northern district and who would be empowered to inspect and moderate the evil practices of the

traders. He even threatened to resign unless he had his wish. Gage hesitated, since he himself had no specific orders to take action regarding the Indian trade and particularly because he was not authorized to pay the salaries and the operating expenses of these assistants. In fact, he had received instructions from the treasury to incur no expenses beyond a fixed budget except in case of emergencies. It would be awkward if he permitted Johnson to go ahead and the treasury later decided there was no emergency. On the other hand, Gage did not doubt that Johnson could exercise authority legally in the wilderness, for Gage had nothing but contempt for the supposed charter rights of some of the colonies to lands beyond the Alleghenies.[16] In addition, Gage was not unwilling to relieve his officers of the burdensome duty of regulating the trade at the northern posts. Finally the general gave in. Under Johnson's scheme the governors of the colonies issued licenses binding traders to obey rules set up by Johnson. These required that all business be transacted at the posts where his assistants were stationed and that the Indians be treated fairly in regard to weights and measures. Also the traffic in rum was to be limited. Johnson's system had a good effect, but it was rather expensive. Besides, Canadian traders claimed they could not carry on their business profitably at the posts and they found a champion in Guy Carleton, lieutenant governor of Quebec, who protested to London about Johnson's rules.

Gage not only gave his blessing to the attempts of Stuart to establish Indian boundaries and of Johnson to regulate the trade but also to the use of the policy of *divide et impera* in regard to the southern Indians. In addition he did what he could to ensure that the lands of the Indians in the neighborhood of Fort Pitt were returned to them. In 1766 he earnestly urged the governors of Pennsylvania and Virginia to make arrangements for the removal of the white settlers in the valley of the Monongahela, but without result.

[16] *Gage Corr.*, I, 328.

Soon after taking office Lord Shelburne began the rather arduous task of reading the dispatches from America received by his immediate predecessors. Observing from the letters of Gage, Johnson, Stuart, and various governors that relations with the Indians were in a rather dubious state, he undertook to make temporary arrangements for improving them, until they could be given more careful consideration. He sent out a sharp reprimand for all those officials who had sought to assure peace on the frontiers of the colonies by encouraging intertribal wars among the Indians, but he gave his cordial approval to Stuart's efforts to carry out the Proclamation of 1763 by negotiating boundary lines and issued orders to enable Stuart to arrange for a line between the Cherokees and Virginia. Apparently unaware of Johnson's attempts to manage the trade in his district, he instructed both Stuart and Johnson to do what they could to restore order in the trade until the British government should manage to concoct a general plan for the solution of the Western problem. Shelburne also commanded Gage to do what he could, in co-operation with the governors of Pennsylvania and Virginia, to remove the settlers in the valley of the Monongahela. In addition Shelburne asked Gage for information and advice which would be useful in the formation of a well-rounded American policy. He asked Gage in what way political relations with the Indians could best be managed, how their trade should be regulated, where to locate the redcoats, how to cut imperial expenses in America, and how to raise an American revenue that would help to meet the cost of empire. He condemned the "Plan for the Future Management of Indian Affairs," a projected scheme of the Board of Trade to place the Indian problem almost completely in the hands of Johnson and Stuart. He indicated that the regulation of the Indian trade should perhaps be returned to the colonies "under some general rules and restrictions," and he suggested that the troops be temporarily concentrated in the new colonies rather than in the old, unless Gage's opinion was definitely to the contrary. He rather

hoped that the salaries and expenses of British officials in America could be met at least in part by a more effective collection of the annual ground rents owed by all those persons who obtained grants of land from the crown. Toward the same end he asked Gage for data regarding smuggling in America, with the idea of obtaining larger revenues at the ports by putting an end to that most improper practice.[17]

The response of Stuart and Gage to Shelburne's orders is most interesting. Stuart took to heart the minister's adjuration to drop the policy of *divide et impera,* but did not attempt to deny that he had followed the policy; he renewed his efforts in the matter of boundary lines in the hope that he would eventually be able to establish a barrier between the whites and Indians stretching from the Ohio on a course parallel to the seacoast all the way to the Mississippi; and he undertook to establish in the South a system of regulating the trade similar to that which Johnson had set up in the North (which Johnson continued). Gage somewhat disingenuously told Shelburne that he had "never known such a policy adopted as Your Lordship takes notice of, that of setting the Indians upon each other . . . ," but, like Stuart, he decided it was not wise to use the principle while Shelburne was in power. The general gave his support to Stuart's plan for trade regulation as he had previously given it to Johnson. Through the commanding officer of Fort Pitt and the governors of Pennsylvania and Virginia he tried to persuade the pioneers above Fort Pitt to remove from the lands of the Indians. He offered to support the authority of the governors by force, but they would not use force, particularly since it was doubtful whether the settlements lay in Pennsylvania or Virginia. Finally the commanding officer at Fort Pitt, under Gage's orders given upon the general's own responsibility, commanded the settlers to remove, and they complied.[18] However, a few months later the settlers returned in greater numbers than ever, and Gage decided to let them remain rather than to incur the

[17] *Ibid.,* II, 45, 47–51.

[18] *Ibid.,* I, 138, 142–43, 147–48.

criticism of the colonists by using troops on his own authority to protect Indian lands.[19]

In response to Shelburne's requests for information Gage sent in a series of reports in April, 1767.[20] These reports were very cautiously worded, undoubtedly because they were public documents and subject to examination both by the cabinet and Parliament—Gage would not assume responsibilities of others unnecessarily. Gage urged that political relations with the Indians be kept in the hands of the royal superintendents, and also that Johnson and Stuart continue to supervise the Indian trade. As an ideal solution to the problem of the trade he suggested it might be wise to copy the arrangements formerly made by the French, by which the Indian country was divided into districts and a monopoly of the business in each district given to responsible persons. Under such a system government could collect a large sum for each of these monopolies, and very little supervision would be needed. Since Gage realized this plan was impractical because of its monopolistic feature, he favored as an alternative continuing the existing method of regulation, in spite of the fact that Johnson and Stuart were spending fairly large sums in their efforts to force the traders to behave. The general recommended new rules which he hoped would further restrain the traders. He also urged that attempts to keep them from going to the Indian villages be abandoned. In his reports Gage took no definite stand upon policy in regard to the disposition of the troops; he was very careful to discuss only problems of detail on the assumptions that the Western forts would be maintained and that royal management of Indian affairs would continue. Nor did he offer any way to reduce the expenses of the American establishment, although he suggested that the colonies benefiting from the Indian trade ought to pay the cost of regulating it. His answer to the problem of smuggling was a recommendation to increase the personnel in the customs service. Nor did he offer any method to raise a revenue quickly in

[19] *Ibid.*, 157.

[20] *Ibid.*, 124–32, 135–37.

America. Gage expressed an opinion that income from the quit-rents could be increased somewhat immediately by greater efficiency in collection. As time passed, larger revenues might be obtained by exacting heavier fees from new land grants. However, he noted, such a course would enrich the treasury in the distant rather than in the near future.

In October, 1767, after a rather lengthy delay, Lord Shelburne finally laid the whole matter of policy regarding the West before the Board of Trade for a formal report. To save money, he favored returning the control of the Indian trade to the colonies and also the management of political relations "under certain general restrictions." He wished to withdraw a part of the troops from the West, in accordance with Barrington's ideas, and to concentrate the remainder in strategic locations. In response to urging by Johnson and Stuart he wanted a boundary line drawn and surveyed between the old colonies and the Indians. Immediately beyond that line he would have no settlement. However, he suggested that three new colonies be formed on the banks of the Mississippi and its tributaries. By January, 1768, Shelburne was able to issue the necessary orders to Johnson and other officials to complete the boundary line behind the old colonies. Then he ran into a snag. In fact, he had become unpopular in the ministry and was relieved of the duties of his office in regard to America. A new department of state for the colonies was established, and Lord Hillsborough was placed in charge of it. As a result, the matter of Western policy was recommitted to the Board of Trade, which finally produced a comprehensive report on March 7, 1768. This report, after lengthy discussion in the cabinet, was largely adopted. On April 15 Hillsborough officially described to Gage and other British officials the future course government intended to follow. Indian affairs were to be divided, with the colonies managing the trade and the superintendents controlling diplomatic relations. The idea of building new colonies in the valley of the upper Mississippi was shelved, and expansion of the old colonies was to be

limited by a continuous boundary drawn between them and the Indians. Gage was to withdraw troops from many outlying forts, especially from interior posts, and to concentrate his forces as much as possible in Quebec, Nova Scotia, East Florida, and the middle colonies, "to serve effectually upon any emergency whatever." However, Hillsborough indicated that Forts Niagara, Detroit, and Michilimackinac should be maintained. In addition Gage was temporarily to keep up Fort Pitt, a post in the Illinois country, and another fort on the New York–Quebec passageway, and was to report as to the advisability of withdrawing from these three posts. Unofficially Barrington supplemented the minister's instructions to Gage in a private letter of April 4. Barrington told his friend that all the members of the cabinet (including Hillsborough) with the exception of two unimportant ones were agreed that all interior posts except Detroit and possibly Niagara and Michilimackinac [21] should be abandoned and that Gage could ignore the opinion of the two dissidents with perfect safety.[22]

In the summer of 1768 Gage consequently ordered the abandoning of many posts, including Forts Iberville and Panmure on the lower Mississippi, Appalachie in East Florida, Augusta in Georgia, Prince George and Charlotte in South Carolina, five posts in Nova Scotia, and two stations in Bermuda and New Providence. During the next three years no fewer than twenty-two forts were deserted in accordance with his directions. In June, 1768, Gage indicated to Hillsborough and Barrington that he thought it unnecessary to maintain in the interior anything more than Ticonderoga, Detroit, Michilimackinac, Niagara, and two small posts useful in keeping up communications upon the Great Lakes, but he would not go beyond his official instructions in spite of Barrington's urging.[23] Nine months later Gage forwarded at the request of Barrington his opinion that all in-

[21] Niagara and Michilimackinac should be kept up provided it was not expensive to do so.

[22] Barrington to Gage, April 4, 1768 (Private), and enclosed minute of meeting of Hillsborough, General Harvey, and Barrington, Gage MSS.

[23] *Gage Corr.*, I, 175–79, II, 477–78.

terior posts except Ticonderoga and Michilimackinac should be abandoned, provided Britain would absolutely refuse to have any connection with Indian affairs and would let the colonists suffer any consequences which might result from mismanagement of those affairs. Clearly, by March, 1769, Gage wanted the troops overwhelmingly concentrated on the seaboard.[24] Fully informed of Gage's ideas, Hillsborough agreed with them. Indeed, Barrington told Gage that they were approved by the whole cabinet.[25] Nevertheless, no further orders regarding the interior forts were sent out until January, 1772. Then, after much discussion in London, Hillsborough finally instructed the general to abandon Forts Pitt and Chartres. Gage was to use his discretion as to the advisability of keeping a small force somewhere in the Illinois country.[26] The soldiers accordingly were moved out of the two posts in 1772. A small detachment, however, was stationed at Kaskaskia until the War of Independence was well under way.

After the summer of 1768, as the result of the withdrawal of numerous forces from the interior, Gage had more substantial forces at his disposal on the Atlantic seaboard. He was forced to keep larger detachments at Mobile and Pensacola than he would have wished. On the whole, however, especially after 1772, his men were as well concentrated upon the Atlantic shore line as he could have hoped. Curiously enough, just as the process of consolidation was almost complete, Gage was informed by Barrington, in July, 1771, that government was considering a plan to reduce his army from sixteen to ten regiments in order to save money.[27] Obviously some politicians in power in London fancied that their troubles in America were on the wane, which was indeed temporarily true. Gage told Barrington that he was opposed to the plan since ten regiments

[24] *Ibid.*, II, 301–302.

[25] Barrington to Gage, June 4, 1769 (Private), July 1, 1770 (Private), Nov. 1, 1770 (Private), Gage MSS.

[26] *Gage Corr.*, II, 136–39.

[27] Barrington to Gage, July 2, 1771 (Private), Gage MSS.

would be insufficient to permit him to gather enough troops to meet an emergency adequately—and Gage was not at all sure that there would be no more emergencies.[28] The cabinet did detach four regiments from Gage's command in 1772, but these were sent only upon temporary duty in the West Indies to deal with an uprising of the wild Caribs. The cabinet did not make any change in the American establishment, which continued to stand at sixteen regiments until hostilities were about to begin in Massachusetts. The fact that the ministry considered seriously the reduction of the army in America by one third and that it actually sent four regiments to the West Indies at this time should dispose of any thought that Lord North, prime minister after 1770, and his colleagues were irrevocably committed to the establishment of a military despotism in America.

Of course, withdrawal of the troops from most of the interior posts did not mean the end of Gage's responsibility for the West, since he was inevitably interested in that area as long as British regulars remained on the Great Lakes communication and as long as the British government continued to look upon the West as an important property of the empire. If British politicians had been really astute when they revised their policy regarding the West in the spring of 1768, they might well have thrown the whole problem upon the shoulders of the colonies, as Gage had suggested. The colonies would not have prevented the seizure of Indian lands, they would not have kept order in the Indian trade, and they would not have been able to combine so as to secure efficiency in diplomatic relations with the savages. Wars between the colonists and the Indians would have resulted, and the colonists would have had to pour part of their energies into frontier defense. Moreover, the several colonies were bound to quarrel regarding the possession of western lands and the profits of the fur trade. The position of Britain in respect to her colonies would have been materially strengthened. The colonists might

[28] *Gage Corr.*, II, 589–90.

soon have been begging for the assistance of the British regulars. The Indians might have served as a restraining influence upon the Americans as the French had formerly.

The cabinet, indeed, had hoped in the spring of 1768 to place a large part of the burden of Indian affairs upon the shoulders of the colonists and to save itself trouble and money as well. On the other hand, the ministry wished to prevent the settlement of the West, largely in order to maintain peace with the Indians, and insisted upon a boundary line beyond which the colonists should not pass. Moreover, the ministry permitted Johnson and Stuart to continue in control of treaty relations with the savages, and it failed to resolve that British troops should not be used against the Indians except when their services should be asked for and appreciated by the Americans. The cabinet expected that the colonies not only would take over the task of regulating the Indian traders but also would see that their citizens kept within the boundary line which was to be completed between the provinces and the savages. However, the colonies, as those British officials who knew America had predicted, were unwilling to spend money to regulate the trade. Besides, they were utterly unable to agree upon common action, indispensable to successful administration. Gage and Stuart did their best to persuade the various colonial governments to do something in the matter, but with very little success. Johnson saved his breath. The Americans had condemned the efforts of the superintendents to prevent trouble in the trade before 1768, and they had indicated that they would like nothing better than to manage it for themselves. When they were given the chance, they did almost nothing. They likewise failed to take any action to protect the lands of the Indians. They were much more interested in occupying these lands and in profiting from the trade with the red men than they were in doing justice to them and preserving peace with them. Consequently the only real efforts to deal with the Indian problem after 1768 were made by royal officials. The region beyond the Alleghenies gave Gage almost

as many headaches after 1768 as it did before that time.

Indeed, there was little that Gage, Johnson, and Stuart could do after 1768 to keep order in the trade, since efforts to persuade the various provinces to pass suitable legislation and to cooperate with each other in dealing with the problem were all in vain. It was possible for them, however, to accomplish something through protecting Indian lands and through diplomacy. Stuart was zealous in his attempts to prevent encroachments on the hunting grounds of the red men. He did everything he could to avert rapid expansion of the white settlements in his district, in the main because he feared such expansion would bring on a great Indian war, but partly because he believed that it would tend to develop manufacturing in the older colonies to the disadvantage of British manufacturers. He was, of course, opposed by land speculators and pioneers. He was also opposed by royal governors who desired the growth of their provinces, like Sir James Wright of Georgia and Lord Botetourt and Lord Dunmore of Virginia. Nevertheless, Stuart had some success in the deep South, where there was only moderate expansion before the War of Independence. He had much less success in the upper Ohio Valley, partly because the Virginians were more numerous and aggressive than their southern neighbors and partly because Johnson and influential British speculators labored strenuously for expansion.

Gage's opinions coincided exactly with those of Stuart regarding the advisability of preventing rapid settlement of the American interior. He gave Stuart his moral support in the deep South and also exerted his influence to protect the lands of the Indians in the Ohio Valley. When Johnson, in disobedience of his orders from England, bought from the Iroquois in the fall of 1768 a vast territory south of the Ohio River and east of the mouth of the Tennessee, Gage protested to Johnson. It was obvious that the Shawnees and Delawares, who claimed the south bank of the upper Ohio, and the Cherokees, who claimed the middle stretches of the south bank, would be dissatisfied

with this sale. It was almost certain that the Iroquois eventually would repent their action when white settlers moved into the regions they had ceded. In fact, as Gage pointed out, the Indians generally were bound to resent a large-scale penetration of the Ohio Valley, for they had seen the tribes formerly residing on the Atlantic coast exterminated by the whites. But Gage's protest was without effect. Even Hillsborough, whose attitude toward westward expansion was substantially the same as that of Gage and Stuart, could not prevent the consummation of the sale. Powerful interests were at work in London supporting Johnson's action and favoring the development of new settlements. Speculators from Virginia and Pennsylvania enlisted British noblemen and businessmen in speculative projects, and their influence was felt even in the cabinet. By the late spring of 1773 the cabinet had approved purchases of the claims of the Six Nations and the Cherokees to the whole south bank of the Ohio east of the Kentucky River and was disposed to permit settlement in what is now West Virginia and eastern Kentucky. The ministry, like Johnson and the land speculators, ignored the pretensions of the Delawares and Shawnees.

Most of these newly purchased lands were earmarked for the famous Grand Ohio Company, in the membership list of which were to be found the names of Benjamin Franklin and William Franklin, Philadelphia merchant Samuel Wharton, London banker Thomas Walpole, and of various titled persons in Great Britain. For a time even Johnson was a partner in the company. Lord Hillsborough was sincerely opposed to the projects of these speculators. He resigned in August, 1772, giving as his reason the fact that his colleagues seemed disposed to favor a vast grant to the company. In the following June everything seemed arranged for the establishment of a fourteenth colony between the Alleghenies and the Kentucky River, with most of the lands within the proposed colony in the possession of the Grand Ohio Company. Then, for reasons which are not wholly clear, the projects of the speculators began to

languish. No doubt, as the War of Independence approached, the cabinet cooled toward schemes which might benefit such persons as Benjamin Franklin. Undoubtedly Gage helped to destroy the idea of a fourteenth colony. He was never asked officially for advice regarding the project until he returned to England on leave in the summer of 1773. However, he expressed before that time the most determined opposition in private letters to Barrington, and he wrote to Hillsborough, after that gentleman's retirement, to applaud the minister for resigning rather than abandoning his principles.[29] Since Barrington was bitterly against westward expansion, he permitted Lord North, Lord Dartmouth (Hillsborough's successor), and a third member of the cabinet to read Gage's private letters in the fall of 1772. Presumably the perusal of these papers did not greatly affect the opinion of the king's confidential servants. Later, however, when Gage and Barrington worked together in London to kill the intended colony of "Vandalia," they probably made a real impression upon those in authority.[30] In any case, the British government failed to give its final approval either to the creation of the proposed new colony or to a grant of lands to the Grand Ohio Company.

While the British ministry tried to make up its mind regarding the advisability of westward expansion after 1768, the disgruntled Shawnees and Delawares carried on protracted intrigues with the purpose of organizing a general attack upon the frontiers of the older colonies. Emissaries of these two nations traveled from tribe to tribe throughout the hinterland between 1769 and 1774. They hoped to obtain help from the Creeks, Chickasaws, Choctaws, and Cherokees, and even from the Iroquois. Their plotting sorely disturbed Gage, Johnson, and Stuart. However, the Creeks and Choctaws were kept too busy with

[29] Actually, it is possible that Hillsborough's opposition to the erection of "Vandalia" was the excuse rather than the reason for his resignation from office.

[30] Barrington to Gage, Sept. 2, 1772 (Private), Sept. 28, 1772 (Private), Dec. 2, 1772 (Private), Gage MSS.; *Gage Corr.*, I, 339, II, 615–16, 622–23, 631; Haldimand to Gage, Nov. 4, 1773, Haldimand Papers, Archives of Canada.

their private war to undertake an attack on the colonies; and Stuart and Johnson were able to persuade the Iroquois and the Cherokees to oppose rather than to accept the scheme of the Delawares and Shawnees. The American colonists, although they did not do it, might well have thanked Gage and Stuart for their successful efforts to maintain peace on the western reaches of the older colonies in the years just before the War of Independence. Of course, by that time the majority of Americans would have insisted upon inspecting the mouth of any horse given by the British government.

CHAPTER IX

The Army Goes to Boston

TO ALL BUT the most discerning persons in America the repeal of the hated Stamp Tax marked the end of the dispute between the Mother Country and the colonies. Actually the repeal was accomplished by narrow margins in both houses of Parliament, and there were many who bitterly opposed it. The repeal would not have carried, had it not been that the supporters of that measure permitted simultaneously the passage of the Declaratory Act, which roundly asserted the *right* of Parliament to make laws to bind the colonies *in all cases whatsoever*. The lordly Pitt, who was chiefly instrumental in bringing about the erasure of the Stamp Act from the statute books, tried to convince the Commons that Parliament lacked the power to tax the colonists, but that its authority was unlimited in all other fields of legislation. However, few members saw any sense in this view. If Parliament could confine and regulate the trade of the Americans, if it could prevent them from manufacturing ironware, if it could prohibit them from issuing paper currency, as the colonists admitted, then, most members of Parliament concluded, it could also certainly tax those same colonists. In other words the dominant sentiment in British political circles was that Parliament undoubtedly had the power to tax, but that it was inexpedient to attempt to enforce this particular tax.

Economic considerations, effective propaganda by Benjamin Franklin, a desire to avoid trouble, and a wish to please the Americans had brought about the repeal. While Americans rejoiced everywhere throughout the colonies in their seeming victory, they failed to observe that Parliament had substantially rejected their constitutional arguments. Nor did they realize how much sympathy there was in British high places toward the attitude of George Grenville, who had fallen from office before the crisis reached its height and who vigorously and obstinately demanded until the bitter end that the Stamp Act be enforced at all costs. Some British officials in America, including Gage, did realize that one swallow did not make a summer and that further and more dangerous storms might well be in the offing. Gage believed firmly then in the full sovereignty of Britain over her empire; and he discerned in the riots of 1765–66 a fixed disposition on the part of many Americans to have their own way, whether within or without the empire. As has been shown above, he favored more and more, as months passed after the repeal of the tax, the concentration of troops in places where they would be as ready as possible for action in the event of another crisis in relations between the Mother Country and the colonies. When that crisis came, if he had his way, Britain would stand firm, and the malcontents would learn the futility of their baseless complaints and their lawless agreements not to buy British goods.

That Parliament and British leaders generally were determined to assert their power over the colonies even at the time that the Stamp Tax was abolished is shown not only by their words, but by their deeds. A few weeks afterward Parliament amended the Sugar Act by taking off the three penny per gallon duty which it required on molasses from foreign islands, substituting *a one penny duty on all molasses brought into the continental ports, whether from British or foreign islands.* By this arrangement the British planters in the West Indies clearly lost the protection which they had supposedly received earlier. Ob-

viously Parliament had arranged to collect a tax upon imports into America solely for revenue. Not long afterward even Lord Shelburne, esteemed by most men a true friend to America, bluntly demanded that the legislature of New York, which had failed to provide for troops stationed in New York as required by the Quartering Act of 1765, do its duty toward Parliament.[1]

Nor were the hearts of British leaders softened by the response of American legislatures to a request by Parliament that they undertake to compensate for their losses those persons who had suffered at the hands of American mobs in the Stamp Act riots. Eventually compensation was voted, but it was done after much arguing, many Americans resenting the fact that Parliament seemed to "require" them to perform the action. However, most Americans apparently did not notice that they were paying nonprotective taxes on molasses imported into the colonies after 1766, and they failed to reopen the battle against taxation without representation until the passage of the Townshend Acts in 1767, which also provided for the collection of revenue through the taxation of imports into the colonies.

If the ministry headed by William Pitt which came into power in August, 1766, displayed a strong inclination to avoid decisions regarding Western problems and the disposition of the army, it was nevertheless responsible for the second major attempt to extract a revenue by taxing the Americans. In 1767 Charles Townshend, the brilliant and spoiled darling of the House of Commons who served in the cabinet as chancellor of the exchequer, was plagued with demands from the House that some way be found to keep down land taxes in England. Townshend quickly produced a plausible solution. In opposing the Stamp Act most Americans had admitted that Britain had the right to impose external, though not internal, taxes. Why not extract the needed cash from American pockets by imposing additional duties upon goods imported into the American colonies, since such taxes would conform to the silly constitu-

[1] *Gage Corr.*, II, 44–45.

tional arguments advanced by the colonists? The House of Commons was delighted, for a feeling had developed in Britain that the generosity shown in repealing the Stamp Tax was unappreciated in America. A bill was passed levying import duties upon red and white lead, on certain kinds of glass and paper, and upon tea. In addition the customs service was reorganized and a Board of Commissioners was ordered set up in Boston, for it was determined to collect the new duties and to enforce the long-defied acts of trade and navigation which had regulated colonial commerce in theory but not in fact. Townshend hoped to collect about £40,000 per annum from the new taxes and planned to use part of the sums realized to pay the salaries of royal officials in the colonies, notably governors and judges, so that they would not be dependent for their salaries upon the American assemblies. If any funds still remained—which possibility was rather unlikely—they could be employed to help support the army. Townshend's proposals really aimed at establishing British authority in America more firmly, not at a genuine solution of the financial problem. About the same time Parliament voted to suspend all legislative privileges of the legislature of New York until that body should comply with the Quartering Act of 1765. That act had required the populous colonies in America to provide quarters, salt, vinegar, and beer or cider for the troops stationed within their bounds. New York had failed to furnish more than housing. The suspending law was never put into effect, because the New York assembly had already met all demands for quartering before it reached America. But the various actions of Parliament in 1767 and the sternly avowed intention of the British government to collect revenues in and to exert sovereignty over America roused a hurricane of protest in the colonies.

As soon as the tidings of these measures reached America the pamphleteers, the newspaper writers, and the orators went into action. External taxes levied by Parliament for revenue were no more constitutional than internal taxes; the attempt

to coerce the New York legislature was utterly foreign to sound principles of fundamental law; the new Commissioners of Customs were instruments of tyranny; and the proposed independence of executive and judicial officials from popular support was subversive of the established system of government in America. The passionate language employed by many of these "Defenders of Liberty" was hardly calculated to soften the determination of the aristocrats and rich merchants of Britain to have their way with America, but no great quarrel might have resulted if opponents of the new measures had not organized for resistance, in some places even for violent resistance. Merchants and radicals again formed associations to coerce Parliament into repealing the Townshend Acts by refusing to import British goods. Because of economic jealousies, especially between the great ports, these associations were at first ineffective, but they were functioning rather smoothly by 1769. They did not prevent completely the importation of British wares, but imports were reduced by half. As was to be expected, the Massachusetts merchants, led by those of Boston, formed the first associations. Massachusetts also took the leadership in an attempt to obtain co-operation between the American assemblies in asserting their constitutional rights. In February, 1768, the assembly of that colony sent a Circular Letter to the other colonial legislatures urging unified action. Although a majority of the assemblies expressed sympathy, another congress like that of 1765 did not materialize.

The Earl of Hillsborough castigated the emission of the Circular Letter by Massachusetts as a "seditious" attempt to form "unwarrantable combinations" and "to excite an unjustifiable opposition to the constitutional authority of Parliament," and demanded that it be withdrawn under pain of dissolving the assembly. When that body indignantly refused to recant, it was dissolved. However, Hillsborough's drastic course aroused Americans everywhere. Did they not have the right to petition for redress? The secretary's response to a report upon nonim-

portation agreements was cut from the same cloth. The Americans had shown "a malevolent and ungrateful disposition, which I hope, however, is far from being general . . . and seems to be an object of contempt undeserving any notice." [2]

Public opinion, inflamed by constitutional arguments and by threats of economic warfare, rose to lofty indignation on both sides of the Atlantic because the newly appointed Commissioners of the Customs tried energetically to enforce the Parliamentary trade and navigation laws. Most colonial propagandists had earlier admitted the constitutionality of these acts—when they were not carried into execution. But when the commissioners plainly displayed a disposition to wage from their headquarters at Boston a campaign to eliminate smuggling and other dubious commercial practices, Americans in the maritime towns, especially Boston, resorted to menaces and violence in an attempt to cow the officials, largely sent from Britain. The colonists never lacked for law, for when appeals to acts of their own legislatures, to their charters, to the British constitution, and to the fundamental rights of man all failed, there was always the law of self-preservation—and New England economy had flourished because the trade acts had gathered dust in the statute books. By March, 1768, the commissioners and their assistants in the New England ports were ostracized and had begun to fear for their own safety. On the fourth of that month a mob of boys, with men in the background, gathered in Boston around the home of a commissioner, William Burch, although they did not harm him. Rightly or wrongly the commissioners were deeply concerned and asked Governor Francis Bernard what support he would give them in the event of insurrection. Bernard replied that he could promise no military assistance, for by the constitution of Massachusetts he could not request troops without the consent of his council. The council, the members of which were selected by the governor *and* the assembly, would not give its approval. Actually, Bernard himself did not wish to make the

[2] *Ibid.*, 60.

request, for he was sure troops would eventually be sent to Boston, and he wished to avoid responsibility for their appearance. Two weeks later, to celebrate the anniversary of the repeal of the Stamp Act, some resentful citizens hung effigies of Commissioner Charles Paxton and an inspector named Williams upon a Liberty Tree in Boston. It is doubtful that the commissioners were in real danger at that time, but they claimed that they were, and they begged Commodore Samuel Hood to send a warship to Boston for their protection. He immediately complied by ordering the *Romney* to Boston Harbor. They informed their superiors in London that the civil officers of Massachusetts were unable or unwilling to protect them and that there was danger of an insurrection, which opinion Bernard supported in letters to the ministry.

As a result of these reports Hillsborough wrote a "Secret and Confidential" dispatch to Gage on June 8: "The contents of these papers will evince to you how necessary it is become that such measures should be taken as will strengthen the hands of government in the province of Massachusetts Bay, enforce a due obedience to the laws, and protect and support the civil magistrates, and the officers of the crown, in the execution of their duty." The minister instructed Gage to send immediately one or more regiments to Boston and, if necessary, to take possession of and to repair Castle William. These orders did not reach New York until the end of August.[3] Meanwhile, although popular feeling was running high in Boston, the commissioners undertook on Friday, June 10, to seize the sloop *Liberty*, owned by John Hancock and long suspected of being used for smuggling. Toward evening of that day the ship was seized at Hancock's wharf and taken out into the harbor under the guns of the *Romney*. A mob quickly gathered and attacked the customs officers with coarse epithets and stones. Several officers were injured, and damage was done to the homes of two of them. During the following week there was tremendous excitement.

[3] *Ibid.*, 68–69.

The bolder radicals publicly urged that the people rise against their oppressors; the more cautious American leaders contented themselves with holding a series of town meetings which roundly condemned the Townshend Acts as unconstitutional, demanded that the customs officials be removed, and asserted that by appearances war had been declared against Boston. On June 13 four of the commissioners fled to the *Romney,* and thence to Castle William.

From Castle William these men wrote to Gage on June 15. They claimed that the fury of the Bostonians was still mounting "even to open revolt." They informed the general that Bernard and his council could not shelter them against attack and would not ask for troops, and they begged him to send a force of regulars to Boston immediately upon his own authority. At the same time they wrote to Colonel William Dalrymple, commanding officer of the British garrison at Halifax, and to Commodore Hood, urging that troops and additional warships be dispatched. They also informed the treasury in London of their plight. Hood promptly sent additional ships, but Dalrymple prudently refused to act without instructions from Gage. The general likewise refused to act, declaring that he had no legal authority to employ soldiers to disperse rioters except at the request of the civil officers of Massachusetts. However, Gage was deeply moved by the commissioners' appeal. He informed Bernard that troops would be placed in Boston whenever the governor desired, and that Dalrymple would obey any orders sent by Bernard to Halifax. At the same time Gage instructed Dalrymple to hurry the previously planned concentration of two regiments at that port and to be ready for embarkation if and when Bernard should ask his assistance. He urged Hood to give any necessary help in the way of transportation.

Bernard was already highly unpopular in Massachusetts and feared to ask for soldiers because of the anger such a request would inevitably arouse in his province. He wanted them, but was absolutely unwilling to be responsible for their presence.

He told Gage that soldiers could not reach Boston from Halifax or New York in time to suppress riots, and he tried to persuade the general to put a force in Boston upon the pretext of routine quartering. But Gage positively declined to take such a step upon his own authority, since he foresaw that *he* would then be the object of a storm of abuse, both in England and in America. Finally, late in July, Bernard, knowing the result in advance, polled his council, under oath of secrecy, on the question of asking for troops. The answer was a unanimous negative. Bernard then decided that the question was one that must be settled by the home government.

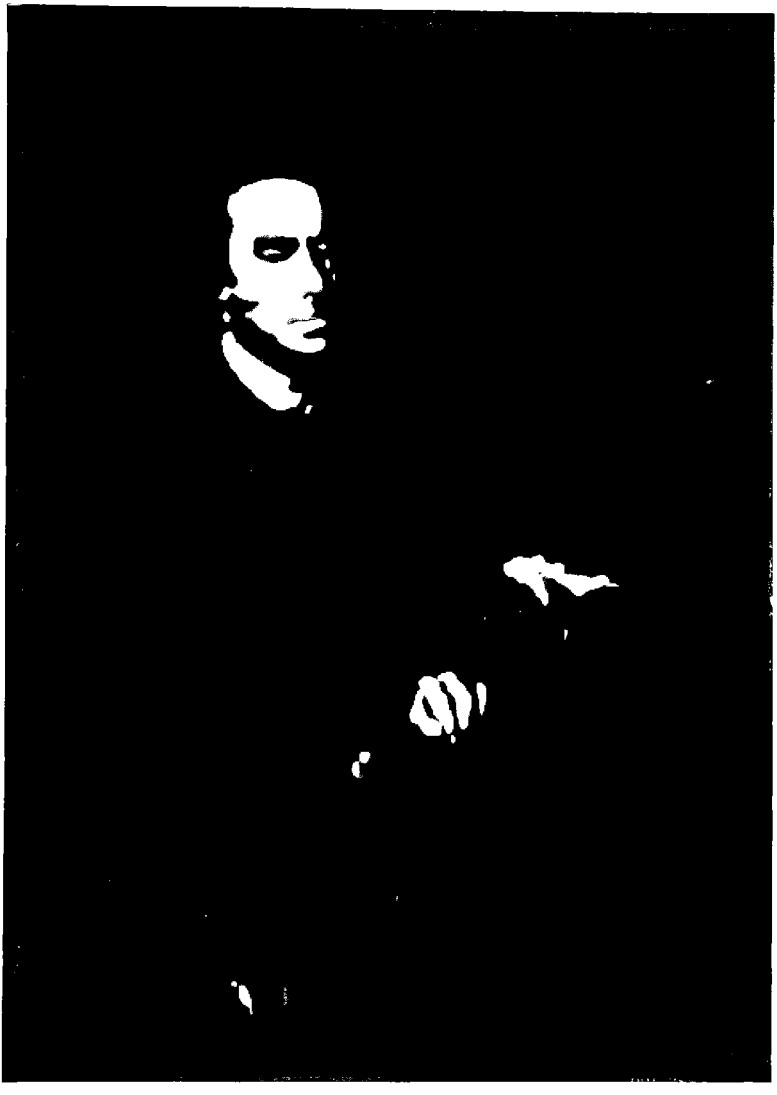
Although Gage refused to send troops to Boston upon his own responsibility, he hoped that the British government would take decisive action to restore "that dependence on the parent country, to which all colonies have ever been subjected." He used energetic language in a "private" letter to Barrington. There should be in England "warm and spirited resolves with speedy execution in consequence thereof"; and "the noble spirit of the New-Englanders" should not "meet with applause and powerful protection, as on a former occasion. . . . Quash this spirit at a blow, without too much regard to the expence and it will prove oeconomy in the end. . . . If the principles of moderation and forbearance are again adopted, or that these transactions shall find favor and protection with any powerfull and popular leaders amongst you there will be an end to these provinces as British colonies; give them then what other name you please." [4] Gage was strongly of the belief that it would be best to scotch the movement against Parliamentary authority immediately by a display of power; the movement might otherwise grow beyond control. From the traditional viewpoint of empire he was undoubtedly right.

While these events were transpiring in America, Hillsborough's letter of June 8 was en route to New York, at which place it arrived in late August. Gage immediately sent William Shirreff

[4] *Ibid.*, 479–80.

to Boston under the pretext of private business with full powers to consult with Bernard and to arrange for the transportation and disposition of whatever forces were desired. In secret conferences Bernard asked for two regiments, one to be stationed in the town and another to be placed in certain barracks located on Castle Island. To avoid criticism he requested that Castle William itself, then garrisoned by provincial troops, should not be occupied. Shirreff agreed and forwarded the necessary orders, previously furnished to him by Gage, to Halifax.

In order to prevent a sudden shock and consequent rash action by the townsfolk, Bernard let it be known through private conversation that the regulars were coming to Boston. But the news aroused a furor of resentment, and hotheads among the Sons of Liberty openly preached armed rebellion. Since the Massachusetts assembly was not in session, arrangements were made for a Boston town meeting on September 11 to consider the situation. At this point James Otis, then at the height of his power in Massachusetts, intervened. He had long contended that the Americans had two choices: to recognize the supremacy of Parliament and to bargain with it, or to end all disputes by war. He had been sternly opposed to rioting and had insisted upon a peaceful settlement. He now privately conferred with Samuel Adams, Dr. Joseph Warren, and other radical leaders. No doubt because they realized that an outbreak in Massachusetts at that time would be condemned in the middle and southern colonies, these leaders agreed with Otis upon measures to control the forthcoming town meeting. The town meeting voted on September 12 to ask all the towns in the province to elect delegates to a "Committee of Convention" which should consult upon the "peace and safety" of their constituents; it reminded the townspeople that every man was required by law to keep a musket—there was danger of war with *France;* and it made meaningful reference to the Glorious Revolution of 1688 which had ended the tyranny of James II. Otis seems to have thought that even these measures were much too strong. When the "Committee of



GENERAL THOMAS GAGE, c. 1769

From a painting by John Singleton Copley in the possession of Mrs. Frederick S. Moseley of Boston. Reproduced by permission.

Convention," with representatives of most of the towns present, met ten days later, he at first refused to attend. He was persuaded to take part and proceeded to lead the group into a very moderate course. After drawing up a list of grievances, the gathering was permanently adjourned.[5]

When Gage learned of the Boston town meeting, he feared that the troops would be attacked when they attempted to land. His usual reserve and caution disappeared in anger. He secretly laid plans to transport two regiments from the Floridas to support Dalrymple's force, then at sea; on September 25 he ordered the redcoats about New York to be ready for instant service; he prepared to go to Boston personally "with a pretty large company"; no longer worried about hurt feelings in Massachusetts, he instructed Dalrymple to take possession of Castle William so that a strong place would be available in case of stubborn resistance in the town; and he sent the engineer Captain John Montresor by land to Boston with directions to note strategic locations and likely spots for encampments en route, to make a military sketch of the town, and to repair Castle William. He wrote to Hillsborough on September 26 of "the mutinous behaviour of the people of Boston," and "the treasonable and desperate resolves they have lately taken."

> They have now delivered their sentiments in a manner not to be misunderstood, and in the stile of a ruling and sovereign nation, who acknowledges no dependence.
>
> Whatever opinion I may form of the firmness of these desperadoes. . . . I am taking measures to defeat any treasonable designs. . . . Whilst laws are in force, I shall pay the obedience that is due to them, and in my military capacity confine myself solely to the granting such aids to the civil power, as shall be required of me; but if open and declared rebellion makes it's [*sic*] appearance, I mean to use all the powers lodged in my hands to make head against it.
>
> . . . I know of nothing that can so effectually quell the spirit of sedition, which has so long and so greatly prevailed here, and bring the people back to a sense of their duty, as speedy, vigorous, and

[5] Upon Otis' role in these events, see the sketch of his life in the *Dictionary of American Biography* by Samuel E. Morison.

unanimous measures taken in England to suppress it. Whereby the Americans shall plainly perceive, that it is the general and determined sense of the British nation, resolutely to support and maintain their rights, and to reduce them to their constitutional dependence, on the Mother Country.[6]

The same day Gage wrote privately to Barrington regarding "the very disagreeable news from Boston." "The people there grow worse and worse, and if any thing is rebellion in America, they seem to me in an actual state of rebellion.

"You have tried forbearance, moderate and conciliating measures, to little purpose, they have encreased the storm, instead of laying it. . . . Notwithstanding the treasonable resolves the people of Boston have taken, to oppose the landing of the two regiments expected there from Halifax, I am very much of opinion, they will shrink on the day of trial, which I soon expect to hear of. They are a people, who have ever been very bold in council, but never remarkable for their feats in action." [7]

Immediately after sealing these letters Gage learned that the home government had been deeply stirred by news of the riot of June 10 and that drastic action was the policy of the day. A letter from Hillsborough of July 30 informed him that the sixty-fourth and sixty-fifth regiments were being sent from Ireland to support and protect "the civil magistrates and officers" of Massachusetts in the discharge of their duty and to induce "a due obedience to the laws of this kingdom," and that a frigate and a ship of the line would be made available to augment the naval forces upon the North American station. Gage then decided to drop his plans for reinforcing Dalrymple from New York and St. Augustine—a difficult business at best—since he believed four regiments at Boston would be sufficient. Shortly afterward Gage determined to visit Boston in person, for difficult problems would certainly result from the appearance of the troops, even though there should be no military resistance.

Gage's careful preparations to deal with rebellion in Massa-

[6] *Gage Corr.*, I, 196–97. [7] *Ibid.*, II, 488.

chusetts were not without justification. It seems likely that the more reckless leaders of the "faction" in Boston meditated opposing Dalrymple's landing by armed force. But their brethren from the neighboring towns refused to take the final step. It was clear that resistance was useless unless the colonists generally would stake all upon the iron dice of war, and it was fairly certain that the middle and southern provinces would not rise. With a formidable naval escort furnished by Commodore Hood, Dalrymple sailed from Halifax on September 19 with the larger part of the fourteenth and twenty-ninth regiments. This British "armada" reached Boston Harbor on September 28. On October 1 Hood placed in battle array within musket shot of the shore one ship of the line, seven frigates, and two tenders, and the troops began to disembark. They were greeted with cold silence rather than hot lead. From New York on October 8 Gage was able to tell Hood that more opposition could be expected from "law & gospel, than sword and gun."

As Gage had anticipated, vexing problems arose when Dalrymple and Bernard sought to obtain for the redcoats at the expense of Massachusetts the quarters and the provisions required by Parliamentary law. Dalrymple and Bernard wished to place the sixteenth and the twenty-ninth in the town, saving some barracks on Castle Island for the troops coming from Britain. Part of the soldiers were permitted to use Faneuil Hall temporarily, but the remainder were forced to camp on Boston Common. The civil authorities in Boston would do nothing toward permanent housing in the city as long as the barracks on Castle Island were empty and available. Moreover, they refused outright to furnish the provisions.

About four o'clock in the afternoon of October 15 Gage himself, accompanied by several members of his staff, reached Boston by land from New York. He joined Bernard in the attempt to secure compliance with the law. As a result, Bernard's council reluctantly voted to the army the use of the Manufactory Building in Boston, which belonged to the province. But certain per-

sons who had been permitted to occupy that structure defied Bernard and the sheriff and prevented them from taking possession by physical resistance and by legal processes. On October 27 many members of the council finally petitioned Gage to remove the soldiers to Castle Island, vainly, for he had already undertaken to quarter the troops at the expense of the crown. James Murray, a British sympathizer, rented to the army several buildings on October 4. On October 28 William Molineux, a most passionate and eloquent leader of the "faction," who seems to have had an eye for business as well as politics, let a number of warehouses on Wheelwright's wharf to the army at £25 per month. Eight days later Molineux rented another building at £5 per month.[8]

Although Gage had hoped to remain at Boston until the sixty-fourth and sixty-fifth regiments had been properly established there, he was unable to do so. The sixty-fourth and part of the sixty-fifth reached harbor in mid-November and were accommodated, partly in the barracks on Castle Island and partly in the town, but several companies of the sixty-fifth, including its colonel, Alexander Mackay, were driven off the coast by a violent storm and were forced to seek refuge on the island of Nevis in the West Indies. Mackay did not arrive at Boston until April 30, 1769. Gage was compelled to return to New York on November 24 because of the pressure of business. Colonel John Pomeroy of the sixty-fourth was placed in command of the troops until Mackay, who had been given the rank of major general upon the American establishment, should reach Boston. Gage had

[8] Some may find it difficult to believe that this "Son of Liberty" actually helped to quarter the British troops. But the evidence is clear and is to be found in part in his own handwriting. See "A Letter from William Molineux," *New England Quarterly*, XVII (1944), 107–108. There the writer suggested that Molineux was probably acting for himself, although possibly only as an agent. George P. Anderson, who has made a study of Molineux, in a letter to the writer indicates his belief that the properties rented really belonged in 1768 to Charles Ward Apthorp. Molineux, he explains, was Apthorp's agent in other matters and was allowed great freedom of action. Mr. Anderson describes Molineux as one who would find no inconsistency in renting quarters to the army in the morning and in railing against the army at night.

been careful not to offend needlessly, even withdrawing his instructions to occupy Castle William. The most ardent defenders of American rights had no criticism to make regarding Gage at this time. He had really had rather a good time in Massachusetts. Nevertheless, he was still convinced that there was considerable sentiment for independence among leaders of the "faction." He believed that there might have been a revolt in Boston had not the troops been sent to that place.

When Gage learned after his return to New York that the home government did not intend to take further strong measures to deal with Massachusetts, he was disappointed, for he believed that the vigorous steps taken by Britain had had a good effect in America.[9] However, in an Address to the Throne, Parliament had voted to support the coercive policy of the cabinet and had requested it to employ against the principals of the Boston "faction" an old statute of the time of Henry VIII which authorized trial in England for treason committed outside England, but no action had been taken. While American leaders condemned the Address for meditated—though not active—cruelty, Gage wrote despairingly to Barrington in May, 1769:

> . . . many people were surprised at the Address, as they expected for certain, that all those who signed the letters for convening the deputies of the province at Boston would have been impeached and ordered to England to take their trial. What better information can Governor Bernard give? What evidence can he procure so authentick or so strong as their own publications? the opposition that has been made to the seditious spirit so prevalent in this country has certainly been of use, and if those who have been so instrumental in leading people astray, had met with the punishment they deserve, others would be more cautious hereafter. The impeachment of those who signed the letters of convention, the appointment of the council by the King and the abolition of the town meetings of Boston, and to establish a corporation in lieu thereof, as in other citys, are three points which I sincerely hoped would have been carried into execution.

[9] Gage to Viscount Townshend, March 28, 1769, Maggs Bros. Catalogue No. 597 (Summer, 1934), Item 373.

Gage was disposed to be very stern with Massachusetts in 1768–69.[10]

As the summer of 1769 approached, Gage was even more dissatisfied with the attitude taken by his superiors regarding America, for the home government displayed less and less vigor. Early in June he received instructions from Hillsborough to remove all or part of the troops from Boston, as the situation should dictate. A few weeks later letters from the minister informed the American governors that the Townshend duties, except for that on tea, would probably be repealed. About the same time it was learned that Bernard was recalled to England. Since the regiments in Massachusetts could serve no useful purpose under the circumstances and since they were exposed to insult and recrimination, Gage was eager to remove them. Before the end of July the sixty-fourth and sixty-fifth were evacuated to Halifax, to the great disappointment of Bernard. When Bernard insisted that the fourteenth and the twenty-ninth remain to protect royal officials, Gage reluctantly complied. After the evacuation of the sixty-fourth and sixty-fifth there was room in the barracks on Castle Island for one of the remaining regiments. Gage therefore proposed to place one regiment in the town and one upon the island. Because badly needed repairs upon the island barracks were not made and because of the danger of legal complications, it was finally decided to leave both regiments in the town.

British troops remained in Boston town for seventeen months, without intentionally firing a shot, until the fateful evening of March 5, 1770. That is not to say that all was quiet on the banks of the Charles during that period. Quarreling between the soldiers and the citizens was unavoidable. As was to be expected, the troops were frequently denounced by governmental organizations, newspapers, and private individuals in Massachusetts as instruments of tyranny and oppression. Such denunciations might not have aroused much response, but they were coupled

[10] *Gage Corr.*, II, 509–10.

with all sorts of ingenious devices to annoy and distress the redcoats. They were often arrested for breaches of the peace; they were constantly abused with the most bitter and profane epithets; they were pelted with snowballs, mud, and stones; and they were spat upon—all this in a town which constantly screamed about its rights under law. Simultaneously some townsmen did all they could to persuade soldiers to desert. They even made a deal with one soldier to free him from the service by making him an indentured servant. The army had to send the man off to Castle William to prevent him from securing his release. Nor was the army always prudent and inoffensive. Beating drums were heard during services on the Sabbath, citizens were challenged by British sentinels, and the derisive strains of "Yankee Doodle" frequently floated upon the air. The redcoats did not always conduct themselves with propriety. Many of them were willing to squabble and curse and pull noses and exchange threats with the town rowdies. Nevertheless, the commanding officers, under instructions from Gage, tried to preserve strict discipline and to prevent disorder. It is doubtful that Samuel Adams and Dr. Joseph Warren and their associates made equally strenuous efforts to restrain the townspeople. Some British officers believed—as did John Adams himself—that the "faction" deliberately encouraged attacks upon the troops in the hope that an incident would occur which would render the troops odious in the eyes of mankind and which might serve to widen the gulf between Britain and America.

The British commanders in Boston were indeed in a cruel situation. They found it exceedingly difficult to keep their own men in order, and they could not employ military force except under instructions from civil officials. Neither Bernard nor his successor, Governor Thomas Hutchinson, who took office on July 31, 1769, nor any other qualified officer dared to employ them to prevent mob action. More than one Boston merchant was forced to sign the nonimportation agreements under the very nose of the British army. But the most bitter part of the potion which

the army officers were compelled to drink was undoubtedly the insidious propaganda which Boston radicals emitted in the *Journal of the Times* to discredit the British garrison and British policy generally.

The author or authors of the *Journal of the Times* have not been identified, although Bernard's surmise that Samuel Adams and his associates were responsible is doubtless close to the fact. The *Journal* was composed of supposed news items from Boston, and was sent secretly from the office of the radical publishers of the Boston *Gazette,* Edes and Gill, to New York, where it appeared in the columns of Holt's New York *Journal* on Thursday. On the following Saturday it was printed in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* at Philadelphia. Later it appeared in the Boston *Evening Post.* It was widely copied in other colonial newspapers and even in England.

The *Journal of the Times,* which ran a lengthy course from October, 1768, to November, 1769, possibly longer, "covered" Boston from the time the redcoats landed until after Bernard was recalled. Apparently consisting of factual news items, it contained authentic news, fabricated news, and a good deal of radical preaching. It constantly and most effectively attacked the Commissioners of the Customs as inefficient, haughty, and dishonest, and Bernard as tyrannical and deceitful; it depicted John Hancock as the object of a frame-up by the commissioners rather than as a smuggler; and it energetically assailed the arbitrary policy of the British ministry. But its favorite object of attack was the British force in Boston. The troops were not needed in a city populated by law-abiding inhabitants, and their very presence was illegal; the frontiers were exposed to Indian attacks while the soldiers became demoralized in the close confinement of their barracks; their lewd and debased habits corrupted the high morals of the citizens (deserters were evidently men of high quality, since they were excused and even praised); and the expense of the garrison was enormous. Civil officials were forced to knuckle under to the army officers, who deliberately fostered

insolence and crime among the rank and file. The soldiers even tried to incite the Negroes to rebellion. Dozens of instances of unpunished outrage, assault, and theft by the redcoats were circumstantially reported, the details often seemingly authenticated by affidavits. News items regarding attempted rapes by the soldiery frequently appeared—attempts uniformly unsuccessful, usually because sober and honest citizens came upon the scene in the nick of time to rescue the lady in distress. There was never any suggestion of misconduct on the part of the townsfolk, in spite of the fact that rural inhabitants of the province were not at all eager in those days to see a member of the maritime population in their quiet villages.[11]

No British army officer who had any pride in his profession or any desire for the joys of the military in times of peace could be happy in command of the redcoats in that caldron of politics known as Boston. Colonel John Pomeroy, a man of ability and good character, asked Gage for leave of absence almost as soon as he assumed the command—private affairs in England demanded his presence there, the usual excuse of the officer uncomfortable in America.[12] He was allowed to depart as soon as Mackay arrived, in the spring of 1769. He had hardly shaken off the dust of Boston when Mackay, an old acquaintance of Gage's and also a respectable officer, began insistently to press for leave. Mackay likewise felt that a sojourn in England was indispensable. He received Gage's permission to embark, but remained long enough to observe the less sober and nonsober citizens of

[11] Many of the journals have been reprinted in Oliver M. Dickerson (ed.), *Boston under Military Rule 1768–1769 as Revealed in A JOURNAL OF THE TIMES* (Boston, 1936). The editor of this volume, as his choice of a title indicates, believes that the radical propaganda is substantially true. Much of it is undoubtedly based on fact. However, it tells only one side of the story. The reports of the military officers in Boston to Gage tell the other side. Dalrymple declared in September, 1769, that respectable Bostonians of the anti-Parliamentary party detested the *Journal of the Times* and managed to force its temporary suspension. Colonel William Dalrymple to Gage, Sept. 25, 1769, Gage MSS.

[12] In 1764 one army colonel in Pensacola bluntly gave Gage a more substantial reason for asking permission to go to England: he had contracted a venereal disease and needed the services of a good physician.

that turbulent town celebrating the anniversary of the Boston Stamp Act riot, August 14, "to show their loyalty, love of peace, order, & good government," as a British officer cynically remarked. When Mackay sailed, on August 18, Lieutenant Colonel Dalrymple reassumed command.

Dalrymple, no saint, was an intelligent and prudent man. Like his predecessors, he realized that he was in a very embarrassing position. Almost immediately he began to suffer from newspaper attacks made in the *Journal of the Times* and elsewhere, and he could not draw much consolation from Gage's condemnation of most of this propaganda as "infamous and scandalous lyes." What was far more important, he soon came to dread that the ugly temper manifested by many of the citizens would quickly lead to a great riot, probably another attack upon the four detested Commissioners of the Customs, who had returned to the city after the first landing of the troops. He requested Gage to authorize him to employ the troops, if necessary. Gage sympathized with Dalrymple. He replied on September 25 that he too believed that rioting might break out at any moment; that all ranks in Boston were fond of "anarchy & licentiousness"; and that "tyranny of the people appears to be confirmed in opposition to order justice and every mark of a regular government." However, said Gage, he could not give orders to suppress rioting because he himself lacked power to order troops into action in such cases unless he was requested to do so by some civil authority. "Had I proper authority to act in these cases, I should have interfered in matters that have occurred here lately, wherein I think everything has happened but a declaration of war against Great Britain.[13]. . . You will feel the same indignation & resentment which such proceedings must occasion in the breast of every Briton here, who has the least love or regard for his country, but if they do not rouse a proper spirit at home, what can we do here?" [14]

[13] Gage referred here to the forcible seizure in New York by members of the nonimportation association of goods brought in by nonsigners, and mob attacks on two customs informers.

[14] Gage to Dalrymple, Sept. 25, 1769, Gage MSS.

There was really nothing Gage could do except to hope that the home government would somehow eventually be persuaded to take decisive action. He himself would not directly and officially undertake to persuade. He argued that he had no right to interfere in civil matters and declared he had no wish to serve as a "spy" upon civil officials. He continued to be unwilling to risk his own destiny in the battlefields of politics.

A month later he was still very angry. To Dalrymple he inveighed against "an illegal and dangerous combination that threatens a speedy change in the constitution." Seeking some indirect method whereby his superiors would see the American situation as he saw it, without direct official representations on his own part, he expressed a forlorn hope on October 21 that some of the Boston merchants would stand out for importation to the last, in spite of the nonimportation association, "for the greater the extremitys to which the usurpers of government and law carry their audacity, the sooner the necessity of opposing them must appear; and from their present transactions, they shew themselves as bitter enemys to the Kingdom of Great Britain, as either Frenchmen, or Spaniards could possibly do. . . ." Two days later he offered another suggestion. If threatened by a mob, the importer could prosecute any member of it who might set foot in old England, where law was still law.[15]

On November 5 Gage forwarded to Dalrymple still another and a better way to bring Boston to the attention of people at home. He ordered Dalrymple to get all the affidavits he possibly could regarding recent events in Boston and to have a shorthand expert take down verbatim all statements made in several cases then pending involving charges against the soldiers, also to keep a day-to-day journal of events. Gage wanted only the exact truth and planned to send the data to a bookseller in England who could profit by publishing the material and at the same time could tell the British people what was really going on in Boston.[16]

[15] Gage to Dalrymple, Oct. 21, 1769, Oct. 23, 1769, *ibid.*

[16] Gage to Dalrymple, Nov. 5, 1769, *ibid.*

Here was a good idea, a very good idea for an army man meddling in politics. Unfortunately for the historian and for the reputation of the army in America, it was never put into effect.

On Thursday, October 26, a Boston mob assailed a British guard going off duty. One soldier had his mouth bloodied by a blacksmith, and an officer was struck on the head by a stone. The mob pressed hard upon the guard until a soldier accidentally discharged his musket, and a captain of the twenty-ninth named Molesworth ordered the men to bayonet any person who continued to strike at them. Then the rioters disappeared, but Molesworth was arrested for breach of the peace.

On the following Saturday night, another mob profaned the Sabbath by tarring and feathering a supposed customs informer. The same evening still another group of advocates of American liberties attacked John Mein, a Boston printer who had dared to publish on several occasions customhouse figures which proved rather conclusively that certain merchants who posed as zealous nonimporters actually were secret importers. Mein proved to be adept both at publication and in defending himself, for he held off his assailants with pistols and made good his escape to the British main guard. Dalrymple was so fearful of an assault upon the troops that he kept them under arms all night. Mein wisely sailed for England. Gage thereupon dropped his scheme to tell the home folks the story of Boston, expecting that Mein would do the job. But Mein did not undertake it, although he seems to have been employed by high officials as a political writer.

These uproars appalled Dalrymple. When he reported them to Gage he predicted that a formidable attack upon the main guard by a mob was inevitable and that it would not be long delayed. He said he was both sick of his job and physically sick, and hinted that he too would benefit from a leave of absence.[17]

Winter did not cool the hot spirits of "incendiaries" in Boston. Early in December a grand jury of Suffolk County examined letters to the ministry from Bernard, Gage, and the Commissioners

[17] Dalrymple to Gage, Oct. 28, 1769, Oct. 29, 1769, *ibid.*

of Customs which had been obtained in London and sent back to Massachusetts by Denys DeBerdt, agent for the General Court in the imperial capital. The grand jury indicted all the letter writers as slanderers of the province. Shortly afterward Captain Molesworth and his men were tried for breaches of the peace. Here, however, the radicals struck a snag. James Otis, who represented the town, had been attacked in September by John Robinson, a Commissioner of Customs, and had been badly injured. It might have been expected that Otis would devote all his great talents to pillorying the redcoats. Instead, always averse to rioting, Otis, according to a British account, finally declared openly in court that "he was ashamed of the ill usage given to the troops, and that the shamefull ill treatment given them by the inhabitants was the cause of all the prosecutions raised against those innocent strangers." [18] It is to be suspected that Otis knew whereof he spoke and that he was perfectly sane at the moment, although his mind began to give way rapidly early in 1770. The courts agreed with Otis, for the soldiers were acquitted.[19]

The tide of unrest mounted steadily in Boston in February, 1770. On the nineteenth Dalrymple reported that Boston citizens were still waylaying and attacking soldiers in the streets and that he had given orders not to retaliate. He asserted that these attacks were made to render the troops odious so that it would be necessary to withdraw them.[20] A few days later a mob of boys set on by men attacked one Ebenezer Richardson for taking down a sign before an importer's house, and drove him to his home, pelting him with sticks and stones. Then they surrounded his house and broke his windows; when they refused to leave, he opened fire with a musket, killing one boy and wounding another. Richardson was seized and severely beaten before being taken before a justice for arraignment.[21] Another incident, fateful for Britain and America, soon followed.

[18] Dalrymple to Gage, Dec. 28, 1769, *ibid.*

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] Dalrymple to Gage, March 7, 1770, *ibid*

[21] Governor Thomas Hutchinson to Gage, Feb. 25, 1770, *ibid.* On April 21, Richardson was convicted of murder, although the court had directed an acquittal.

CHAPTER X

The Boston Massacre and After

AS FEBRUARY drew to a close and March appeared, tension in Boston finally reached the snapping point. News from New York of the conflict caused by the arrest of Alexander McDougall for a bitter attack in a handbill upon the New York assembly and also of street fights there about a Liberty Pole in which civilians won minor victories over soldiers encouraged irresponsibles in Boston to do their bit; the funeral of the boy slain by Richardson maddened rather than sobered American troublemakers. On Friday, March 2, as the result of an insulting remark made by a workman to a soldier of the twenty-ninth, there was a sharp fight at Gray's ropewalk in which workmen and soldiers used sticks and clubs, with neither side winning decisively. Lieutenant Colonel Maurice Carr complained to Hutchinson about the workman who had caused the conflict. At a meeting of his council on Monday, March 5, Hutchinson presented the complaint. The councilors declared that the only way to prevent clashes was to remove the soldiers to Castle Island. However, no action was taken. Meanwhile, the mobsters and many soldiers in the fourteenth and twenty-ninth regiments, long held in check only with difficulty, had reached an understanding to continue their inconclusive struggle to a decision. Early in the evening

excited parties of boys, men, and soldiers passed through the streets, jeering at each other and now and then striking blows. Not long after nine o'clock occurred the affray ever since known in America by the ill-fitting title, the Boston Massacre.

It began with an attack by a smallish mob upon a sentinel in front of the customhouse in King (now State) Street. Abused, pelted with missiles, and threatened with death, the sentinel retreated up the steps of the customhouse, loaded his musket, and called for help. Captain Robert Preston, officer of the day, was promptly informed and immediately sent to his aid a sergeant and seven men from the main guard, not far away. The soldiers, with bayonets fixed, made their way through the crowd and formed a half-circle facing the mob. Soon Preston himself joined his men. The mob, now numbering fifty or sixty persons, failed to disperse. Instead, the more aggressive berated the file of soldiers with foul language, struck at them with clubs (according to the British) or sticks (according to American writers), and pushed very hard against them. With or without orders, probably without, the soldiers finally fired their muskets, one by one. There can be little doubt that they felt they had reason to fear for their own safety. Three men died almost immediately, and seven were wounded, two of whom died later. Some of those who were shot were merely "innocent bystanders." The soldiers reloaded and prepared to fire again, but were restrained by Preston, who ordered them to the main guard. The mob made no attempt to retaliate. Lieutenant Colonel Carr then appeared and organized units of the fourteenth for an armed struggle. At the same time the twenty-ninth, though confined to barracks, was placed under arms.

As the news, embellished in the process of retelling, spread throughout the town, there was wild excitement, and thousands of citizens coursed the streets, some armed with clubs and cutlasses, but none apparently with firearms. Hutchinson, informed of the tragedy, made his way to the townhouse and spoke from a balcony to a great throng. He urged eloquently that the sol-

diers be dealt with according to law and promised an immediate inquiry. Aided by Dalrymple, who ordered all his men into barracks, Hutchinson finally succeeded in preventing further bloodshed. The mob reluctantly dispersed. Before the night was over Preston was imprisoned and was bound over to the civil courts on a charge of murder; not long afterward his men were formally accused of the same crime.

That same night American radicals also acted: they called upon people in the neighboring towns for assistance. These calls for help were countermanded, but not soon enough to prevent large groups of men from entering Boston early on the following day. At eleven o'clock in the morning Hutchinson met with his council to consider the situation. Selectmen and justices of the peace informed him they could not hold the popular rage in check, unless all the troops were withdrawn from the town. Hutchinson replied that he lacked power to send away the soldiers. A few minutes later a committee of fifteen persons appointed by a town meeting, held simultaneously, appeared. These men demanded the withdrawal of the troops to avoid an armed conflict, and Hutchinson's council advised compliance. Hutchinson again disclaimed authority to command the troops and referred the matter to Lieutenant Colonel Dalrymple, who was present. Dalrymple, although he had only six hundred men fit for duty, suggested that a threatened insurrection was a powerful argument for keeping the troops in the town. At length, however, Dalrymple indicated he would send the twenty-ninth, the regiment most involved, to Castle Island and that the fourteenth would be strictly confined to barracks, until he could receive orders from Gage. His response was not satisfactory. At another town meeting held at three o'clock in the Old South Church it was rejected, and another committee, of seven men, including Samuel Adams, John Hancock, and Dr. Joseph Warren, was sent to Hutchinson and his advisers to demand anew a complete withdrawal. Dalrymple remained opposed, but finally agreed to remove the troops, if requested by Hutchinson. The

governor, in great perplexity of mind, at last consented to make the request. According to one account, Dalrymple gave his word of honor that he would begin preparations for removing his men the next morning and that there would be no unnecessary delay.[1] In return the radical leaders promised to see to it that order was kept in the town, a promise that they kept. A captious person might ask, why did they not keep order before March 5?

On March 12 letters from Hutchinson and Dalrymple of March 6 and 7 describing the Massacre and its immediate results in Boston reached Gage. These letters, especially Dalrymple's, led the general to believe that the troops had already been moved to Castle Island, although Dalrymple specifically reported that he would transfer the twenty-ninth "with all conveniency" and did not mention the fourteenth by name. Immediately replying, Gage gave his approval to what he thought was an accomplished fact. Recollecting the penchant of the Bostonians ("people possessed with such remarkable talents for misrepresentation") for publishing, Gage also ordered Dalrymple to collect "the most impartial accounts of this unhappy affair from the beginning" and to send them home to be printed, so as to rebut American propaganda which was sure to appear.[2] However, Gage was displeased by Hutchinson's action in calling for the removal from the town of both regiments. He believed that the transfer of the twenty-ninth should have been enough to appease the Boston townsfolk. On the same day Gage therefore informed the governor that the troops certainly could do no good on Castle Island, where there was insufficient space for them in any case, and that he proposed to order one regiment from Massachusetts immediately and the other in the near future. He declared that the soldiers should undergo punishment if they deserved it; if they fired "in self defence to preserve their own

[1] Richard Frothingham, *Life and Times of Joseph Warren* (Boston, 1865), 149. Frothingham offers the most detailed account of the Massacre and subsequent events, from a Massachusetts viewpoint.

[2] Hutchinson to Gage, March 6, 1770, Dalrymple to Gage, March 7, 1770, Gage to Dalrymple, March 12, 1770, Gage MSS.

lives; I trust you will do everything in your power to prevent their falling a sacrifice to the resentment of faction, against all principles of justice, and by the pervertion of the laws of their country." [3]

On March 13, through a letter from Dalrymple of the eighth, Gage learned that that officer was actually delaying the movement of the troops to the island as long as possible so that Gage could, if he desired, order them retained in the town. The next day the general therefore instructed Dalrymple to transfer the twenty-ninth to the island, but not the fourteenth, unless Hutchinson and his council absolutely insisted. Gage hoped that the governor would try to keep the fourteenth in the town rather than to have both regiments leave the colony entirely.[4] Four days later Hutchinson begged Gage not to order the troops from the province, since he would then be utterly unsupported.[5] The twenty-ninth had already been established on the island, and the fourteenth soon followed, for Gage's letter of March 14 to Dalrymple, because of inclement weather, did not reach its destination until the twenty-seventh, and Dalrymple had not been able to withstand popular pressure.[6]

When Gage learned that the troops were finally located in the barracks on Castle Island, he laid plans for removing the twenty-ninth from Massachusetts, which were to be carried out unless he received news from home which would render that step inadvisable. There was insufficient room in the barracks for two regiments and the soldiers would inevitably suffer from cramped quarters, especially in case of an outbreak of contagious disease. Besides, two regiments on Castle Island certainly would not improve the situation in Massachusetts. No news of vital importance came, and in April the twenty-ninth was ordered to New Jersey. In the course of the next month the regiment proceeded

[3] Gage to Hutchinson, March 12, 1770, *ibid.*

[4] Gage to Hutchinson, March 12, 1770, Dalrymple to Gage, March 8, 1770, Gage to Dalrymple, March 14, 1770, March 19, 1770, *ibid.*

[5] Hutchinson to Gage, March 18, 1770, *ibid.*

[6] Dalrymple to Gage, March 27, 1770, *ibid.*

by land to Providence and thence to New Jersey by sea. Early in September definite instructions from Hillsborough regarding the force to be maintained in Massachusetts reached New York. Gage was to work with Hutchinson in removing the provincial troops from Castle William and replacing them with the fourteenth. He was to see to it that the fortress was placed in good repair and that accommodations for two regiments were available, and he was to use his own judgment as to whether one or two regiments were maintained in the fort.[7] Hutchinson had already received orders to co-operate with Gage in these matters. Although there were objections made in Massachusetts to the occupation of Castle William by regular troops, Hutchinson and Gage promptly arranged for the removal of the provincials from the fort, and the fourteenth moved in. Gage simultaneously gave instructions which made it possible for Dalrymple to obtain reinforcements at need from Halifax without further orders. Also Captain John Montresor was sent to Boston to repair the fort, and much labor was expended during many months upon the works and barracks. In the summer of 1772 the fourteenth was relieved by the sixty-fourth regiment under Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Leslie, who served as commanding officer at Castle William until after Gage himself returned to Boston as governor of Massachusetts late in the spring of 1774.

After the fourteenth and twenty-ninth were transferred to Castle Island, it could no longer be argued that they were instruments of oppression, and the clamor against them in Boston died down. However, the fate of Captain Preston and his men was inevitably a grave public question. Immediately after the Massacre Boston radicals had done everything within their power to convince the world that the mob had offered no real provocation; that Preston had ordered his men to fire; and that both the officer and his men were guilty of murder. They had collected masses of affidavits reflecting unfavorably upon the conduct of the soldiers and had hurriedly published them both in America and in Eng-

[7] *Gage Corr.*, II, 106–107.

land. At least one of the affidavits was perjured, while others were composed of varying elements of fact and imagination. Other publications by the Boston radicals, including the famous print circulated by Paul Revere, gave an equally distorted view of the events of March 5. The story they told worried Gage and Dalrymple, for they realized that public opinion was a most important stake. Gage therefore requested Dalrymple to arrange for the appearance of various narratives which tended to exonerate the soldiers. However, the Americans gave their version first, gave it more often, and gave it more effectively. It is probably true that they were much more eager for circulation than they were for verification.

Gage was also gravely worried about the American propaganda because of its effect upon the destinies of Preston and the soldiers. He feared partisan passion in Boston would lead to judicial murder or to lynching, and he set to work to do everything within his power to assure the accused a fair trial and safety from mobs. Nor were his fears unwarranted, for the grand jury which brought in the charge against the military men went out of its way to indict four other persons, including three customs officials, all of whom obviously had no part in the Massacre. Moreover, Samuel Adams, Dr. Joseph Warren, and their friends did everything they could to obtain early trials, even invading the superior court on March 23 to bring personal pressure upon the judges in that court.[8] Since early trials could not be just, in view of the prevailing excitement, Hutchinson brought counter-pressure upon the judges. Fortunately for the reputation of all concerned, the judges refused to listen to the radicals and eventually managed to put off the cases until the next fall. In this course Hutchinson and the judges had the full support of Gage, who constantly urged delay, as far as the law would possibly permit. Gage insistently begged for postponement not only to obtain

[8] Frothingham, *Life and Times of Joseph Warren,* 155–56; Hutchinson to Gage, March 18, 1770, April 1, 1770, April 13, 1770, Gage MSS.

fairer trials, but also to give the home government time to consider the situation and to send out reprieves or pardons, if the cabinet so desired. He hoped—and with good reason—that the cabinet would undertake to save Preston and his men from unjust verdicts, since he had sent home accounts of affairs in Boston which described the conduct of the riotous portion of its populace on and before March 5 and which indicated the difficulty of obtaining impartial justice.[9] Actually, there was never much chance that the accused would be legally executed, since Hutchinson, though he could not say so until later, was determined from the beginning, if necessary, to offer reprieves in the event the prisoners were found guilty so that the crown might consider the matter of pardons.[10] Nor was there much danger that Preston and his subordinates would be lynched before their trials, although Preston, with some reason, feared that he would be murdered in his cell.[11] The real danger lay in the possibility that a verdict of not guilty or a verdict of guilty coupled with reprieves or pardons would lead Boston irresponsibles to take justice into their own hands.

On June 22 Hutchinson was able to write to Gage that he had orders from England to reprieve Preston and his men in the event they were condemned. He indicated that he too feared the use of the reprieves would be followed by mob violence, and he asked for Gage's advice as to means to prevent "so fatal an event." [12] Gage immediately replied, on July 1, that he would be glad to furnish a detachment of troops from Castle Island, which could march into the town by way of Dorchester Heights and carry Preston and his men back to the island immediately after the verdicts were rendered. At the same time, fearing trouble in Boston, Gage sent orders to Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Leslie

[9] Gage to Hutchinson, April 9, 1770, April 30, 1770, Gage to Dalrymple, April 28, 1770, *ibid.*; *Gage Corr.*, I, 248–51, II, 536–37.

[10] Hutchinson to Gage, June 22, 1770, Gage MSS.

[11] Captain Robert Preston to Gage, Aug. 6, 1770, Anonymous to Preston, July 20, 1770, *ibid.*

[12] Hutchinson to Gage, June 22, 1770, *ibid.*

at Halifax to revoke all leaves and to have his command there ready for service at an hour's notice.[13] However, Hutchinson replied that he would have no legal authority to remove the prisoners to the island before violence occurred, since Castle William was not a prison, even though failure to remove them meant their deaths. Gage then indicated he knew of no other way to assure the safety of the prisoners. Nevertheless, he may have believed that Hutchinson would use the troops if worst came to the worst, for he assured Preston on August 12 that he need not fear mob action since Hutchinson would "certainly" order the fourteenth into town in case of absolute necessity.[14]

Actually, the situation at Boston had begun to ease by the end of July. Public opinion had moderated; and advice from an opposition leader in London, the Duke of Richmond, to the Bostonians to ask for mercy in the event of convictions in order to prove that the town did not thirst for soldiers' blood had its effect. John Adams and Josiah Quincy, Jr., agreed to serve as counsel for the defense, and the hopes of Preston and his men rose when they were confidentially informed through Dalrymple that reprieves had been received for use in case of need. In fact, when it appeared that the trials might be postponed until the following spring unless care was taken, Hutchinson, the judges in the superior court, the counsel for the defense, and the prisoners cooperated to bring matters to an issue toward the end of October. It was arranged, in the event of conviction, to suspend judgment until March, 1771, by which time it was confidently expected full pardons could be obtained from England.[15]

On October 24 Preston's case was opened. As Gage had anticipated,[16] the chief issue turned out to be whether the soldiers

[13] Gage to Hutchinson, July 1, 1770, Gage to Leslie, July 1, 1770, *ibid.*

[14] Hutchinson to Gage, July 9, 1770, Gage to Hutchinson, July 15, 1770, Gage to Preston, Aug. 12, 1770, *ibid.* James Murray offered his services to protect the soldiers in the courtroom, and afterward. However, his offer was withdrawn when he discovered that the home government had ordered reprieves and had not sent pardons.

[15] Hutchinson to Gage, Sept. 12, 1770, Dalrymple to Gage, Sept. 24. 1770, Gage MSS.

[16] Gage to Preston, Aug. 12, 1770, *ibid.*

discharged their pieces in self-defense and not whether Preston ordered his men to fire. Moreover, it could not be proved that Preston had issued such an order. The judges recommended a verdict of innocent, and the jury unanimously agreed. According to Preston, the most effective of his four lawyers was Robert Auchmuty, although John Adams and Quincy have until recently been given major credit for his defense. In any case, Preston had the pleasure of hearing the judges descant upon malice and aggression displayed by the mob. Under the circumstances violence against him was rendered unlikely by the verdict.

Preston thought it necessary to seek safety in Castle William immediately after his acquittal, since relatives of the slain swore out new warrants for his arrest and since some of the radical party wished to appeal the verdict. From thence he did what he could to help his men, who were brought to trial on November 27.[17] On December 5 the jury brought in its verdict upon the soldiers. On the assumption that no order was given by Preston, each man was held responsible for his own actions. The jury decided that six men had fired in self-defense, but that two, namely the man who had fired the first shot and another who had threatened the day before the Massacre to kill at the first opportunity, were guilty of manslaughter. These men were lightly punished.[18] Gage and Dalrymple immediately made arrangements to permit Preston to go on leave to England and to transfer his men from Massachusetts.

Gage, of course, was tremendously pleased by the conclusion of the trials. In accordance with special instructions from Hillsborough he undertook to pay all the expenses of the accused, since the king had promised to reimburse out of his own funds all sums expended in the defense.[19] He offered to lend money from his private purse to Preston to tide him over until he could reach

[17] Hutchinson to Gage, Oct. 28, 1770, Preston to Gage, Oct. 31, 1770, Dalrymple to Gage, Nov. 1, 1770, *ibid.*

[18] Hutchinson to Gage, Dec. 6, 1770, *ibid.*

[19] *Gage Corr.*, II, 118–19. Pleading the right of clergy, the men were punished by burning in the hand.

London and suggested that Preston should have printed in London all the materials in his possession to inform the British public of the facts.[20] In England Preston apparently was not interested in printing, but the king looked graciously upon him and gave him a pension of £200 per annum, a not ungenerous compensation for the troubles which he had undergone.[21] Gage's own verdict on the cases of Preston and his men, offered to Hutchinson, was, ". . . had you or I been in the situation these men were in, I do believe that we should have fired in defense of our own lives." [22] The judgment of Samuel Adams, John Hancock, William Molineux, and Dr. Joseph Warren, and of Boston town meetings, which has been generally accepted in the United States, was something different. Boston town voted that the anniversary of the "horrid massacre" be commemorated in the cause of liberty, and Dr. Warren delivered on March 5, 1772, the first of a series of addresses which portrayed the event as an episode in a mighty struggle for freedom and the slain and wounded as martyrs in a holy cause. In 1887 the Massachusetts legislature, in conformance with the prevailing American opinion, voted a memorial to the victims. The Massachusetts Historical Society, however, formally protested and resolved that: "While greatly applauding the sentiment which erects memorials to the heroes and martyrs of our annals, the members of the Society believe that nothing but a misapprehension of the event styled the 'Boston massacre' can lead to classifying these persons with those entitled to grateful recognition at the public expense." [23]

Professor Claude Van Tyne's analysis of the moral problems involved in the Massacre is so astute that it deserves repetition: "There was futility in any argument either at the time or since, because if one held that the citizens were maddened by the soldiery, the answer was that the soldiers were nagged to despera-

[20] Gage to Preston, Nov. 12, 1770, Gage MSS.

[21] Barrington to Gage, March 5, 1771 (Private), *ibid.*

[22] Gage to Hutchinson, Nov. 5, 1770, *ibid.*

[23] *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society,* Second Series, III (1888), 314–18.

tion by the citizens. If against that rejoinder it was argued that the soldiers ought never to have been sent there, the reasonable reply was that the growing ascendancy of mob-law had made military force necessary. Following that chain one comes ultimately to ethical questions of right and wrong upon which none may speak with finality." [24] It should be added that the responsibility for sending the troops to Boston lay with the ministry, but that the decision for *keeping* them in the town in the summer of 1769 came from Bernard, who begged Gage not to withdraw them. Of course, Hutchinson also insisted that the soldiers be kept in Boston.

Gage not only approved sending the troops to Massachusetts, but did what little he could toward breaking up the nonimportation agreements formed to force the repeal of the Townshend Acts. From Gage's point of view these associations were vicious in the extreme. While he admitted that individuals had the right to refuse to buy British goods, he was bitterly against formal group action, especially since the association used threats and brute force to compel nonmembers not to import. He was incensed in particular by incidents occurring in New York under his own eyes in which a merchant was publicly coerced into promising not to import and two men who had denounced association members who were secret importers were dragged through the streets by a mob. He could not describe the hot anger which he felt in official communications, but he could and did express himself without restraint in his "private" letters to Barrington. ". . . as an Englishman and a servant, of the public, I can't see [these things] go on without being hurt," he told his friend.[25]

In December, 1769, long after the news came from London that the taxes, except upon tea, would be repealed, Gage urged to Barrington that no action toward that end be taken until the associations were disbanded and suggested that those colonists

[24] *A History of the Founding of the American Republic*, Vol. I, *The Causes of the War of Independence* (Boston and New York, 1922), 289.

[25] *Gage Corr.*, II, 522, 525–27.

who combined to distress the trade of Britain should in "common justice" be prohibited from trading with other parts of the empire. He advocated these strong measures not only as a matter of justice, but also as good policy, for he was firmly of the opinion that the nonimportation agreements would collapse under pressure.[26] Gage noted that there was much dissatisfaction in New York with the agreements, for the merchants at that place suffered more than in Boston and Philadelphia. Moreover, many Manhattan merchants believed that Bostonians [27] were secretly importing even while begging the New Yorkers not to do so. Gage contended that the whole fabric of nonimportation would collapse if one single royal governor insisted on protecting merchants who chose to buy and sell British goods. In January, 1770, he hinted to Barrington that Colden should be appointed governor of New York to reward that aged gentleman for his loyalty in the Stamp Act crisis and to inspirit him to act against the association; and again Gage urged that the acts be kept upon the statute books until the Americans had abandoned their combinations.[28]

When, in April, 1770, the tidings reached New York that the Townshend Acts, except for the tax on tea, had been rescinded—the repealing bill was introduced on March 5, the very day of the Boston Massacre—Gage was deeply disappointed. He predicted that the Americans would import British goods, then enter into new agreements not to import until the levy on the tea was abandoned. He was almost in despair, for he felt that the British government had made the same blunder twice in repealing the Stamp Act and in repealing the major portion of the Townshend Acts. In private letters to Barrington of April 24 [29]

[26] *Ibid.*, 530.

[27] Gage called them "sons of Hudibras."

[28] Gage to Barrington, Jan. 6, 1770 (Private), also June 1, 1770 (Private), Gage MSS. In the second letter cited, Gage declared his belief that nonimportation would have been abandoned in the spring of 1770 except for the persuasive influence of letters from Benjamin Franklin in London to Philadelphia merchants. When things went wrong in America after 1766 there was a strong tendency among British officials to lay the blame upon the "sinister" electrician.

[29] Gage MSS.

and July 6 [30] he vehemently denounced his superiors because they continued to assert the vast powers of Parliament in high words while taking no effective steps to support those powers. In words which had specific reference to Boston, but which could be applied to America in general, he castigated the home government for sandwiching between its assertions of authority ungracious concessions to the Americans. In the former letter he wrote: ". . . if any measures are to be taken with Boston, they must be such as to convince them you absolutely will be obeyed. Had such measures been taken at first, things would not have been so bad as they are; but they have been encouraged to proceed from bad to worse; and possibly now, none but desperate remedies will avail; either lop them off as a rotten limb from the empire, and leave them to themselves, or take effectual means to reduce them to lawfull authority." In the second letter he expressed the same ideas in equally strong words:

> You have found also that lenient measures, and the cautious and legal exertion of the coercive powers of government [in Massachusetts] have served only to render them more daring and licentious. No laws can be put in force; for those who shou'd execute the laws, excite the people to break them and defend them in it. Nothing will avail in so total an anarchy, but a very considerable force, and that force empower'd to act. If that is done at once, with a determined resolution to reduce them, matters may still end without bloodshed. But if you pursue another conduct, and make a shew only of resistance, it is the opinion of many you will draw them into arms. Better therefore to do nothing. Every body must have observed how they have gone step by step to their present degree of licentiousness, and the same conduct towards them continued, will carry them still higher.

More conclusive and more biting denunciations of British policy regarding America after 1765 by any British official of the time cannot be found. Although Gage would have been surprised to be described in such a fashion, it seems fair to say that he was the Cassandra of the first British empire. Whether a stern policy would have forced America to its knees without an armed

[30] *Gage Corr.*, II, 547.

struggle, as Gage was inclined to believe it would even near the end of the second Anglo-American crisis, is, of course, doubtful. Nevertheless, such a policy had a real chance of success. The policy actually followed had none. In September he again privately excoriated British politicians and again demanded action against the radicals of Massachusetts:

> You have yielded by bitts, and in such a manner, as it appeared that every thing was constrained, and extorted from you: such a conduct could not fail to encourage people here to commit every extravagance to gain their ends, and one demand has risen upon another. I hope Boston will be called to a strict account, and I think it must be plain to every man, that no peace will ever be established in that province, till the king nominates his council, and appoints the magistrates, and that all town-meetings are absolutely abolished; whilst those meetings exist the people will be kept in a perpetual heat.[31]

Did he really think then that the constitution of Massachusetts could be so materially altered without shooting? Apparently so, for he told Barrington not long afterward, "my private opinion [is], that America is a mere bully, from one end to the other, and the Bostonians by far the greatest bulleys, and I think you will find them so upon tryal." [32]

The American merchants, as it turned out, did not adopt the tactics against the tea act which Gage had argued they would. Instead, the merchants fell to quarreling among themselves, some desiring to abandon the associations completely, others wishing to continue them until the tax on tea was removed, and still others urging that nonimportation be applied only to taxed goods, in the main, teas. We may guess that Gage quietly encouraged the first group in New York, since he watched the struggle closely. Those who wished to import only goods not taxed won out in New York in July, 1770, and eventually throughout the colonies. Gage gave impetus to the decision of the Manhattan merchants by arranging to hold up a mail packet for a

[31] Gage to Barrington, Sept. 8, 1770 (Private), *ibid.*, 557.

[32] Gage to Barrington, Nov. 12, 1770 (Private), *ibid.*, 564.

few days so that orders could be placed more expeditiously.[33] However, he argued confidentially to Barrington that the tea act should be retained, at least until the next session of Parliament, by which time he expected the nonimportation agreements would be completely dissolved.[34] His plea was unnecessary, for government was determined to maintain the tax as a matter of principle.

The associations did not dissolve completely as Gage had predicted. In certain towns, especially New York and Philadelphia, the ban on English tea continued to be fairly well observed. On the other hand, the colonists in general imported large quantities of tea from the Mother Country. No doubt they would have purchased even more of it from England had it not been that tea smuggled from Holland was generally cheaper. This turn of events was pleasing to Gage, especially since nonimportation was abandoned after much wrangling in the ranks of the Americans. Many merchants were so disgusted with the results of their campaign and so desirous of a return to normal conditions and good business that they abandoned, at least temporarily, the American cause. Even John Hancock would no longer associate or even be seen with Samuel Adams.

Three years of relative quiet in America began in the fall of 1770. There was no continuous moratorium upon politics, but it was extremely difficult to excite people jaded by constant quarreling. There were the usual arguments about quartering troops. The only incident which seriously threatened Anglo-American peace during this period was the destruction of the stranded British revenue cutter *Gaspée* near Providence in June, 1772. The burning by a mob of this much hated vessel, a thorn in the side of Rhode Island smugglers, inevitably created public excitement. Samuel Adams took advantage of the event to develop the famous committees of correspondence in Massachusetts and to bait Hutchinson into a needless quarrel over royal prerogative

[33] *Ibid.*, I, 264; O'Callaghan (ed.), *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York* . . . , VIII, 220–21.

[34] Gage to Barrington, July 10, 1770 (Private), Gage MSS.

in that colony. However, British commissioners who sought to discover those guilty of the destruction of the *Gaspée* had no success in finding the perpetrators, well known to many Rhode Islanders. In December, 1772, in order to be in a position to protect the commissioners should it be necessary, Gage ordered Lieutenant Colonel Leslie secretly to learn whether the sixty-fifth regiment could be brought south from Halifax at that time of the year.[35] All was quiet, however, except for the bickering in Massachusetts, when Gage sailed for England upon leave of absence in June, 1773.

Announcing his approaching departure in a letter to Leslie,[36] Gage remarked sardonically, "I wish you all happiness, and all the satisfaction to be found in Massachusetts Bay which I fear is little enough. . . ." Gage was not satisfied with the situation in America during the quiet years after 1770. He was telling Barrington that "democracy is too prevalent in America, and claims the greatest attention to prevent its increase, and fatal effects," also that Britain should take advantage of the "profound tranquillity" then existing to ". . . not only assert, but also support that supremacy which she claims over the members of the empire, or she will soon only be supreme in words, and we shall become a vast empire composed of many parts, disjointed and independent of each other, without any head." [37] Exhibiting jealousy of the rapid development of trade and especially of manufacturing in America, he was advocating to his friend that American commercial and industrial development be cramped "as far as it can be done prudentially"; and that emigration from Great Britain and Germany be halted, particularly because the Germans brought with them "trades and industry . . . greatly prejudicial to the Mother State." [38] The solutions to the major problems of empire which gradually won popularity among British statesmen after the Canadian rebellion of 1837 and which

[35] Gage to Leslie, Dec. 20, 1772, *ibid.*

[36] May 31, 1773, *ibid.*

[37] Gage to Barrington, April 13, 1772 (Private), *Gage Corr.*, II, 603.

[38] Gage to Barrington, Aug. 5, 1772 (Private), Dec. 2, 1772 (Private), *ibid.*, 616, 627.

have apparently strengthened rather than weakened the empire were displeasing to Thomas Gage in 1772.

Those same solutions were even more disliked by Gage's superiors in England, but they lacked spine to do anything effective about America. The policy of talking "supremacy" and doing nothing to assert it was continued until 1774. Meanwhile, some opposition members continued to offer moral support to the Americans. In the House of Commons in the spring of 1770 Thomas Pownall, then in opposition and in correspondence with American leaders in Massachusetts, even dared to assert that the Boston Massacre arose from the licentiousness of the British troops and to challenge the legal authority of Gage to command troops stationed in colonies where there were royal governors. Pownall's statements did not go unchallenged, for Major General Mackay, a member of the house, savagely defended the honor of the army. The idea that the British army in America could serve efficiently under the several governors as well as Gage was, of course, preposterous. Barrington countered Pownall's effort to destroy Gage's authority by securing an opinion from William de Grey and Edward Thurlow, attorney general and solicitor general respectively, that Gage's command over his troops was complete and that he could delegate his authority to his brigadier generals.[39] But government would not move actively to deal with the American problem as a whole until news came of the Boston Tea Party. Then it moved with great and misdirected energy.

[39] *Johnson Papers,* VII, 629; Barrington to Gage, April 2, 1770 (Private), July 31, 1770 (Private), and legal opinion enclosed, Gage to Lieutenant Colonel Dalrymple, Oct. 29, 1770, Gage MSS.; *Gage Corr.*, II, 545.

CHAPTER XI

British Interlude

IN OCTOBER, 1772, after having served over seventeen years in America without a vacation in his Mother Country, General Gage asked for a leave of absence because of "affairs of my family which require my presence for some time in England." We may assume that private pleasure as well as private business led him to make his request. No doubt he wished to see his brother and to meet Lady Gage; no doubt Mrs. Gage was eager to become acquainted with her husband's English relatives; and both the general and his lady must have been anxious to visit their children in school. Besides, it would be pleasant to take in the sights of London and to enjoy the English countryside. Moreover, the general would be able to learn what was what in British politics, to renew old friendships, and to make new ones.

The cabinet was quite willing to grant Gage's request. However, legal complications kept the Gages in New York until the following June, for Haldimand, who would assume the command by virtue of rank as major general, was judged to be disqualified because of his foreign birth. Gage dispatched a ship to Pensacola in February, 1773, to bring the worthy Swiss to New York, but it was not until June 3 that news came from London that Parliament had passed special legislation permitting Haldimand to serve. Meanwhile, the Gages had learned that another little

Gage was on the way. Nevertheless, they embarked on June 8 upon Captain Effingham Lawrence's *Earl of Dunmore.*

Before the Gages could leave there was the bustle inevitably arising from the departure of a personage for "home." The rector of Trinity Church read a farewell message; Mrs. Gage promised Colonel Augustine Prevost's wife that she would visit her little George in England; and the general offered his friendly services to his acquaintances. Many were truly sorry to learn that he was going, especially since it was quite possible that he would not return. Sir William Johnson, whose health had long been declining, sincerely regretted the departure of "his old friend." Johnson fancied that he would never again see Gage, and he was right.

The almost universal esteem in which Gage was held by people in the town of New York was displayed at a dinner in his honor given by the mayor and the council, when Gage was presented a gift and tendered the keys to the town. The official document offered to Gage with this dinner, even when one discounts the flowers usually strewn on such occasions and the relatively conservative views of those who tendered it, is a remarkable tribute. It undoubtedly reflects to a considerable degree the sober judgment, given in a time of relative tranquillity in Anglo-American affairs, of many responsible persons upon the conduct and personality of Thomas Gage. Its text therefore deserves to be published here in its entirety. It reads:

> We should do violence to the grateful feelings of the citizens of New York of every rank, if we omitted, in taking leave of your Excellency, to express their grief at the departure of an inhabitant, whose residence here has done honor to our city, and of whose politeness and benevolence we have had abundant experience.
>
> It would be painful to you, sir, and on some joyful occasion, it will be more agreeable to us, to recount the most signal instances of your favor to this community. Permit us nevertheless to remark that your's was the arduous task, to command an army in that critical hour, when the several branches of the empire, rent by unnatural discords, seemed to be upon the point of dissolving the union, to which they owe their safety, their glory, and their happiness: and your's was the

honor to direct in that storm, not only with wisdom and firmness, but with that magnanimity and prudence, so happily suited to the exigencies of the times: and with that affectionate tenderness to the true interest of the public which never fails to add more lustre to the character of a general than can be derived from all the splendid exploits of arms.

In the name of a city that has a high and just sense of your distinguished merit, and as a memorial of the gratitude and affection of it's inhabitants, we beg your acceptance of this box, and a title to all the rights of a citizen of New York: and we most ardently beseech the sovereign disposer of human affairs, ever to follow you, and your family with the smiles of a most indulgent Providence.[1]

Finally all was ready for the voyage. After a parting salute from the royal artillery the *Earl of Dunmore* made its way from Murray's wharf down the bay and out to sea. With the Gages were their son John and their two daughters, Louisa Elizabeth and Harriet (Henry, Maria Theresa, and William were at school in England); Captain Stephen Kemble; Major Shirreff; a Captain Dodson; and a Miss Morris, one of the New Jersey Morrises.[2]

The voyage was not unduly rough. Although the ship passed through fog and near icebergs, there was no untoward event. A journal kept by Stephen Kemble which describes this voyage and later excursions in England until the spring of 1774,[3] mentions little about the trip except the weather and sailing conditions. It may be assumed that General Gage did not try to study the Gulf Stream, as Benjamin Franklin did on a similar occasion. Kemble does report catching codfish and a bonita. On July 6, rather late in the day, the Gage party disembarked at Portsmouth and immediately pushed on by stagecoach toward London. They remained overnight at Petersfield on the road to the metropolis. The next evening about seven o'clock they reached the capital

[1] The original document, which is officially dated June 7, 1773, is in the Gage—Firle MSS.

[2] Probably Nancy Morris, who was staying with the Gages in 1779. Gage to Henry Gage, May 21, 1779, *ibid.*

[3] Printed in *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1883, . . . 1884* (New York, 1884–85). Kemble's journals also relate the major facts regarding his and Mrs. Gage's return to America, mentioned later.

and found quarters, which were no doubt arranged for by Lord Gage.

On the morning after reaching London, Gage and Kemble attended the levee of George III, who graciously permitted Kemble to kiss his hand, and who conversed for a time with Gage. For some days thereafter Gage was partly occupied by business, including at least one call upon Barrington. He also had to deal with the problem of Benjamin Roberts, a former army officer and Indian department official who had become involved in various troubles because of a quarrel between himself and Major Robert Rogers at Michilimackinac. Roberts had got into debt and had been tossed into prison as a result. Gage sent Stephen Kemble to see him and probably gave him some money out of sheer kindness; certainly Sir Sampson Gideon made a donation to Roberts.[4] The Gage party, especially Kemble, did some sightseeing. Kemble visited Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's, Vauxhall, Gideon's estate of Belvedere, Sir Henry Banks's seat at Wimbledon, Sion House (residence of the Dukes of Northumberland), and Hampton Court. No doubt Gage was his companion in several of his excursions. However, Mrs. Gage's time was rapidly approaching, and he wished the child to be born at Highmeadow. Late in July the general and Mrs. Gage traveled to Highmeadow, while Lord and Lady Gage retired to Firle.

Probably because of official business, the general and Mrs. Gage soon returned to the metropolis. The general's "good woman" bore him a daughter, earlier than expected, on August 21.[5] This child was named Charlotte Margaret; we may guess that she was named after the wife of George III and her own mother. In September Gage sought out Lord North and Lord Dartmouth to discuss the problem of governing French settlements in the West, thus undoubtedly inspiring action which led toward the Quebec Act of 1774.[6] About the middle of that

[4] Benjamin Roberts to Gage, July 12, 1773, Gage MSS.

[5] *Gentleman's Magazine*, XLIII (1773), 412; Gage to Haldimand, Aug. 22, 1773, Haldimand MSS., Archives of Canada.

[6] Gage to Haldimand, Sept. 14, 1773, *ibid.*

month Mrs. Gage was able to travel back to Highmeadow. There the Gages were joined by Lord and Lady Gage and by Kemble. On December 17 the general and his wife went to Bath for a short stay and thence to London, where they made their home until the following April.

One of the highlights of Gage's stay in London was a visit he made with Kemble in January to Montreal, the home of Gage's old friend Sir Jeffrey Amherst, in Kent. With his family and relatives he also took in plays, concerts, orations, operas, and even an oratorio or two. But the most dramatic show he attended was a session of the king's privy council on January 29 at the Cockpit Tavern, when the British government began at last a strenuous campaign to assert its sovereign authority over the American colonies.

While Gage was still at Highmeadow, rumblings of another crisis in relations between Britain and America reached him in the quiet countryside. In more ways than one the Massachusetts radicals and their brethren were again on the warpath. The new crisis arose from two sources, the attempt of the British government to assist the East India Company to sell tea in America and the affair of the Hutchinson letters.

The affair of the Hutchinson letters had its beginnings long before Gage left New York. In December, 1772, Benjamin Franklin, who was serving as agent for Massachusetts at London, sent to the Committee of Correspondence of the Massachusetts assembly copies of a number of private letters which Hutchinson and others had written to William Whately, secretary of George Grenville. Although the letters were private, various British officials had been informed of their contents. In them Hutchinson castigated the Massachusetts radicals for their conduct. Somehow, in a mysterious way, the documents had been secretly obtained by Franklin, who told his friends they should peruse the letters for the information they contained. However, they were not to publish them. The Massachusetts people, as Gage would have predicted, managed to find excuses for betraying Franklin's

confidence. They published the letters. Worse yet, although the documents told nothing new about Hutchinson's opinions, the assembly used them as evidence upon which to demand his removal from the governorship. A formal petition was sent to London asking for his dismissal, and Dr. Franklin was told to present the petition before the British privy council, a most embarrassing order for Franklin, since the public in England was soon demanding to know how the private letters had reached Massachusetts. A bloody duel between Thomas Whately, brother of William, and John Temple, an enemy of Hutchinson and possibly the man who gave the letters to Franklin, forced the good Doctor to inform the public in January, 1774, that he and he alone was responsible for transmitting them to Boston. Franklin, a deputy postmaster general in America, appeared before the privy council on January 29 under most unhappy circumstances.

Meanwhile, in April, 1773, Lord North and his cabinet had moved to help the East India Company in one of its recurrent financial crises. John Company had a surplus of almost seventeen million pounds of tea. Until that time it had sold its tea in London to merchants who sold it in America. Duties had been paid upon this tea both in England and in America, which explains why tea smuggled from Holland was cheaper in the colonies. The prime minister found a way to help the company. Parliament passed an act freeing it from paying English duties on teas intended for America and permitting it to export them and to sell them in America at rates cheaper than smuggled teas. If successful, it would have given the company a monopoly of the market in the colonies. Unfortunately, however, the company was enabled to choose its own agents in the colonial ports and it chose as its representatives, not merchants who had hitherto profited from the commerce in tea, but favored persons, such as two sons and a nephew of Hutchinson. The result was to anger influential merchants in America and to persuade them to rejoin hands with their old associates among the more anti-British element in American society. North's scheme was soon widely condemned

in the colonies as merely a contrivance to persuade them to abandon their opposition to import taxes.

As might be expected, organizations appeared to prevent the tea from being sold. Attempts were made to force the agents of the company to resign, but without much success. In Massachusetts, of course, the situation was particularly serious because of the activities of Samuel Adams and his friends. Hutchinson's sons and his nephew resolutely refused to abandon their appointments, and it soon became evident that they would be able to sell tea if any were ever landed. In November and December several ships loaded with it reached the New England coast and three anchored in Boston Harbor. After a series of town meetings, really mass meetings, Boston town demanded of Hutchinson that the ships in the harbor be sent back to England. He—with legal justification—refused to permit it. The customs officials—with legal justification—were about to seize one of the ships for nonpayment of duties and to sell the tea when Boston radicals held their famous Tea Party, on December 16, 1773. Their brethren in New York later evinced their mettle by dealing with a ship in that port in similar fashion. In other colonial harbors less drastic action sufficed to ruin North's plan. Soon more sober people, especially among the merchants, regretted the violence committed against private property, but the deeds were done. The news that Americans were trying to prevent the landing of the tea reached London before Franklin appeared to present the Massachusetts petition.

Official and unofficial London were agog that winter day of January 29, for the hearing would indicate the future course of British policy regarding America. It was known that Solicitor General Alexander Wedderburn, presumably with the approval of the cabinet, would defend Hutchinson, and that the privy councilors had invited their friends to see a good show. When the hearing opened, the Cockpit, not a large place, was packed. Present as spectators were such notables as Jeremy Bentham,

Charles James Fox, Chief Justice de Grey, Edmund Burke, and Thomas Gage. Lawyer John Dunning, acting for Franklin, presented the Massachusetts petition and suggested in moderate terms that it would be wise to remove Hutchinson simply because the people of Massachusetts had no faith in him. Wedderburn, a treacherous politician with an abusive tongue which had forced him to leave the Scottish bar, responded with a philippic. He defended Hutchinson, but he spent most of a two-hour oration in castigating New England and in reviling Franklin, Boston born, as a thief and an intriguer. Although it was well known that the king's officials were by no means above tampering with private correspondence, and in spite of the fact that there was very little respect generally for privacy in letters at that time, the councilors and most of the spectators applauded Wedderburn, rudely and brutally displaying their joy because of Franklin's discomfiture. The petition was, of course, rejected. Franklin, who believed that the Tea Party was "an act of violent injustice," said not a word. He knew and others knew that Wedderburn's attack upon him was the opening gun in a campaign against America. Two days later the government fired its second gun by depriving Franklin of his job as deputy postmaster general in America, a valuable appointment he had held for over twenty years.

At almost the same moment that Franklin received his dismissal the ominous tidings of the Boston Tea Party came to London. This news, with Franklin's "sinister" behavior, stirred the British public more than any earlier crisis in American relations. A wave of resentment immediately arose in Parliament and in the cabinet, and there was an almost unanimous desire to punish those responsible. Many, Gage among them, believed that the time had really arrived to learn whether the American provinces were to be "British colonies, or independent and separate states." Gage wanted the radical leaders in Massachusetts arrested and brought to England to be tried for treason. He had rejoiced at

Hutchinson's victory in the Cockpit, although he had not been glad to see Franklin humiliated.[7]

On February 4 Gage obtained an audience with George III. According to the king, he expressed "his readiness though so lately come from America to return at a day's notice if the conduct of the colonies should induce the directing coercive measures. . . ." Also, according to the monarch, Gage said that the Americans would be "lyons, whilst we are lambs"; that if government took "the resolute part," they would be "very meek"; and that he thought four regiments intended for relieving troops in America would be enough to keep order in Boston while its inhabitants were being punished for their conduct. As the king put it, Gage's "language was very consonant to his character of an honest determined man." The king was sufficiently impressed to urge Lord North to see Gage and to "hear his ideas as to the mode of compelling Boston to submit to whatever may be thought necessary. . . ."[8] The letter from George III to North describing this interview, if it is an accurate statement of what occurred, portrays Gage in anger offering to assume heavy responsibilities—responsibilities of which he could not then know the full extent, for government had not yet decided what steps it would take regarding America. It is quite possible, of course, that Gage really expressed more temperate views and that the king ascribed to him some of his own ideas. Gage certainly did say that the troops could maintain order in Boston,[9] but it does

[7] Gage to Barrington, Aug. 27, 1774 (Private), Gage MSS.; Hutchinson (ed.), *Diary and letters of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson*, I, 99–100; Gage to Haldimand, Feb. 2, 1774, Haldimand Papers, Archives of Canada. In his letter to Haldimand Gage said, "The Doctor was so abused, his conduct and character so cut and mangled I wonder he had confidence to stand it; and the whole audience, which was humerous [*sic*], to a man against him."

Gage had a special reason for sympathizing with Hutchinson in that he detested the practice of reading other people's mail. In the Seven Years' War he actually sent a letter to Washington unsigned to balk prying eyes. Gage then spoke of the practice as a "damn'd villainous" one.

[8] Sir John Fortescue (ed.), *The Correspondence of George the Third from 1760 to December 1783*, 6 vols. (London, 1927–28), III, 59.

[9] General James Paterson said long afterward that he heard Gage tell the king that the army could control Boston. Brymner, *Report on Canadian Archives, 1889*, 129.

not appear that he claimed they could do so under any and all circumstances.

Whether North actually consulted Gage at this time cannot now be ascertained. Information regarding the deliberations of the cabinet available at present does not indicate that Gage played any important part in them.[10] That same day the cabinet did ask Attorney General Thurlow and Wedderburn to give an opinion as to whether high treason had been committed in Massachusetts at the time of the Tea Party and to issue warrants for any persons they thought to be guilty. The cabinet also considered the advisability of sending to Massachusetts a strong man to execute the warrants, should they be granted. However, the king's confidential advisers met with difficulties. A week later Thurlow and Wedderburn handed in an opinion that William Molineux, Dr. Warren, Dr. Benjamin Church, and others of less reputation had been guilty. The cabinet had vainly hoped they would also include the names of Hancock, Samuel Adams, and Thomas Cushing. Moreover, the two lawyers absolutely refused to take any action regarding the issuance of warrants. They were afraid the cabinet would lay all the blame upon them in case anything went wrong. According to William Knox, Thurlow said they would be "dammed fools" to sign the warrants alone and that if they had been asked to do it by George Grenville "who was so dammed obstinate that he would go to hell with you before he would desert you there would be some sense in it." It has been frequently stated without firsthand evidence that the British government at this time ordered the arrest of various Massachusetts leaders. Such statements are clearly in error, for Knox tells us "the project was dropt." [11] No orders were

[10] Gage seems to imply in a letter of September, 1774, that he had no part in formulating British policy in the preceding spring. *Gage Corr.*, II, 654. Certainly he knew little about that policy on March 4. Gage to Haldimand, March 4, 1774, Haldimand Papers, Archives of Canada.

[11] *Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Fourteenth Report, Appendix, Part X, 195, 198, 199; opinion by Edward Thurlow and Alexander Wedderburn in letter to Lord Dartmouth, Feb. 11, 1774, Gage MSS.; anecdote by Knox, William Knox MSS., X, 269ff., William L. Clements Library. The writer is indebted to Fred J. Ericson for bringing the Knox anecdote to his attention.

sent out for the arrest of American leaders until January 27, 1775.

If the cabinet did not dare to issue instructions for the apprehension of Samuel Adams and his cohorts in the early months of 1774, other measures which it pursued were severe enough. Someone, perhaps John Pownall, suggested that there were British precedents for punishing a town for the misconduct of its citizens. Since the participants in the Tea Party could not be forced to suffer individually for their misdeeds, why not mete out retribution to Boston as a whole? The idea found favor quickly. The ministry brought into the House of Commons on March 14 the extraordinary Boston Port Bill, which provided for closing Boston Harbor to commerce and for removing the seat of government in Massachusetts to Salem until such time as the governor of that colony should give assurance that its people exhibited due respect for the imperial regime at London. This bill passed both houses by heavy majorities on March 25. It was to go into effect on June 1. Since Hutchinson had asked for and had been granted leave to visit England and since it was believed in London that Andrew Oliver, his lieutenant governor, was dying, it seemed necessary to send a new governor to Massachusetts at once. Gage's presence in America also seemed indispensable. Someone had a bright thought: why not send Gage back across the Atlantic as both governor of Massachusetts and commander in chief? Governor Gage could surely, if necessary, obtain military aid from General Gage. More important, he was patient and prudent, well liked in Boston, and familiar with the situation. The cabinet readily adopted the idea. Gage's appointment as governor was decided upon by the cabinet on or before March 31; [12] it was announced on April 2; and his commission in that capacity was formally signed five days later. It was expected that he would serve as governor only until affairs in Massachusetts had been put in order, when Hutchinson would resume office. The cabinet also authorized Gage to send the four regiments des-

[12] *Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations 1768–1775* (London, 1937), 392.

tined for American service to Boston and to concentrate there such other forces as he might think necessary.

According to John Pownall, Dartmouth's assistant, Gage displayed "indifference" when it was first hinted that he assume Hutchinson's post and the duty of enforcing the Port Bill. We may assume that Pownall meant Gage was not eager to go to Boston.[13] In fact, it is likely that Gage did not even wish to return to New York at that time, in spite of the offer of his services which he had previously made to the king. That offer was probably made in heat or dictated by *noblesse oblige* and not by any desire to become involved again in the harassments of American affairs. Moreover, when that offer was made, Gage was ignorant of the exact nature of the punitive measures the government would adopt. He knew about those measures at the end of March.[14] Possibly Gage would have preferred never to return to America in any official capacity. He had by 1774 amassed considerable wealth, and it was not unlikely that he would inherit family property, for it had become clear that his brother would have no direct heir. Certainly much of the wealth then in his brother's possession would come in the course of nature to Gage or to his oldest son. After all, although he fervently desired the firm establishment of British sovereignty in America, he must have known that the acceptance of the responsibility for enforcing the British Coercive Acts of 1774 in Massachusetts was a risky step. If things went wrong for Britain, he could expect to be the scapegoat. If the Americans knuckled under, the cabinet and the king would take the credit. If the Americans resorted to arms and were defeated, they would revile him as an Alva and a tyrant.

Once Gage had accepted his new and onerous tasks, he moved rapidly. On April 4 he sent an order to Haldimand to provide a staff for him at Boston; on April 7 he consulted the cabinet in regard to various technical questions respecting his powers

[13] Hutchinson (ed.), *Diary and Letters of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson*, I, 223, 259.

[14] Gage to Haldimand, April 5, 1774, Haldimand Papers, Archives of Canada.

as governor;[15] nine days later he sailed on Captain Bishop's H.M.S. *Lively*. He arrived in Boston Harbor on May 13. After consulting with Hutchinson and various other British officials at Castle William for several days, he finally landed on May 17 and duly took up the reins of office. Shortly afterward Hutchinson sailed for England, never to return to his native land. He was to die in England an expatriate.

Mrs. Gage remained in England with Captain Kemble for three weeks after the departure of the general. Indeed, partly because he expected trouble in America, he advised her not to leave England at all. However, she laid plans to visit friends and relatives in New York and then to join her husband in Boston. He believed she would not be happy in Boston, although he had no serious objection to her journey to New York.[16] She probably was not in very good health, since she was accompanied by a nurse as well as Captain Kemble when she embarked on the *Lady Gage*, Captain Mesnard, at Gravesend on May 9. On June 7 the *Lady Gage* hailed a brig from New York, and she learned of the safe arrival of her husband. Early in July she and her brother landed. He reported to Gage on July 22, but Mrs. Gage remained in New York and its neighborhood until September 5. It may be that she did what she could there among her relatives and friends to assure Anglo-American amity. Finally she left for Boston under the escort of Major Shirreff and Colonel Robertson, reaching that place on September 12. She found her husband virtually besieged in the town and royal authority almost nonexistent outside British lines drawn across Boston Neck. She was to endure much in the town during the following eleven months. Nor was her lot during those long months to be made easier by news of her children in England. Henry and William had seen her off to America, but William would not welcome her upon her return. He died in England on October 30, 1774.[17]

[15] *Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Fourteenth Report, Appendix, Part X, 208.

[16] Hutchinson (ed.), *Diary and Letters of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson*, I, 223.

[17] *Gentleman's Magazine*, XLIV (1774), 542.

CHAPTER XII

Revolt in Massachusetts

ONE HUNDRED and seventy years after the event it is easy to see that the Boston Port Bill and the demand of the British government that payment be made for the ruined teas were stupid measures. It was highly doubtful that the people of Boston would be willing to pay for their party, even though Benjamin Franklin urgently pressed for compensation to John Company. The Port Bill was unnecessarily harsh, and its execution would surely be viewed all over America as a tyrannical attempt to subjugate the Bostonians. It would punish the innocent with the guilty. Moreover, the restrictions upon the commerce of Boston would not be removed as soon as compensation should be made for the teas. Those restrictions would remain in effect for at least three months after payment, since Gage had no authority to suspend the Port Bill. A month or more would be needed to take the news of payment to England; a little time would certainly be required to set aside the act; and another month or more would be needed to bring the news of repeal back to Boston. If the Port Bill had been the only step taken by the government to deal with the American problem, it was in itself a long step toward battle. Besides, other steps followed close upon the Port Bill—the other Intolerable Acts.

When Gage landed at Boston on May 17, he was met by civil and military officers and was escorted with great formality through throngs of onlookers to the provincial council chamber. There his commission was read and there he took the oath of office as governor. Afterward he was tendered a great banquet in Faneuil Hall, at which expressions of loyalty and good will toward the English connection came freely from his fellow banqueters, although a toast offered by Gage to Hutchinson was greeted with hisses. A few days later the Anglicans of Boston formally pledged obedience to the crown. Massachusetts radicals, however, were offering their allegiance only to an empire organized according to their own ideas, and the Anglicans were a small minority. A poem quoted at the time by John Andrews, Boston merchant, though hardly great literature, indicates the feelings of many Americans at that juncture:

> May *Gage* be both impower'd, & inclined to close!
> The wounds now opening by our cruel foes,
> May N——h repent, or his obdurate heart!
> Deep feel the stings of an avenging dart.
> And ere his *impious* wishes shall be sped,
> May he be number'd with the *guilty* dead!
> And whilst fresh laurels shall adorn the brave,
> May poisoned! weeds, grow thick upon his grave,
> Till his *detested* name be known no more,
> And we forget the woes we now implore![1]

The state of affairs in Massachusetts became actually critical within two days after Gage's landing. The news of the Port Bill had reached Boston before his arrival. On May 18 a Boston town meeting met to consider the situation. When certain prominent citizens urged that the teas be paid for and offered contributions toward that end, little heed was given, but much interest was displayed in plans to alleviate the sufferings of those who would be most seriously hurt by the execution of the Port Bill, which went into effect on June 1. It was evident that

[1] Andrews to William Barrell, May 18, 1774, Massachusetts Historical Society.

payment for the teas would be bitterly opposed. Various conservative-minded citizens continued to advocate the measure, 130 persons signing an address to Gage [2] in which they offered to furnish their respective shares. The same group also made an effort to abolish the Boston Committee of Correspondence, one of the most effective radical machines for propaganda and agitation. Gage gave these people his hearty support, but they fought a losing fight. After several indecisive town meetings, proposals to pay for the teas and to break up the Committee of Correspondence were definitely defeated toward the end of June. Boston did not intend to seek reconciliation on British terms.

Indeed, the radicals, not only of Boston but of all Massachusetts, were determined to fight fire with fire. Correspondence committees, even before Gage's appearance, called for an American boycott of British goods until the Port Bill should be repealed. They also urged a continental congress to assert and defend American rights. They assumed that the Port Bill was directed against America generally. When, early in June, news arrived from London that other punitive acts directed against Massachusetts were well on their way through Parliament, they took more direct action. On June 5 they produced a "Solemn League and Covenant" which pledged all those who signed it to a boycott of British goods after October 1, and they made it clear that all those who did not sign would be ostracized. Moreover, when the troops sent to Massachusetts began to appear in mid-June, the radicals began a campaign to induce them to desert, promising them that they would be protected against royal authority.[3] At the same time the Massachusetts legislature, which Gage, in accordance with his orders, had called into session at Salem on June 7, positively refused to bend before British authority. That body refused even to consider the matter of payment for the teas, and it quietly began to plan a call for a

[2] June, 1774, Gage MSS.

[3] "A Well Wisher" to soldiers of fourth regiment, June, 1774, *ibid.*

continental congress to meet at Philadelphia on September 1. When Gage learned of its proceedings, on June 17, he hastily sent Thomas Flucker, secretary of the province, to the hall of the assembly with a proclamation dissolving it. However, the members had seen to it that the door was locked and carried out their plan while Flucker impotently read the document outside. Then, having done their work, they allowed themselves to be dismissed.

Gage had done his best to inspire conservatives to action. He had even opened negotiations with the Massachusetts Baptists, who were not happy under a Congregationalist hegemony. However, the Baptists eventually turned against Britain.[4] It was certainly obvious even before June 17 that the people of Massachusetts were almost solidly supporting Boston. After June 17 Gage could only hope that the people of the other colonies would not align themselves with Massachusetts and that he would be able to destroy the power of the local radicals through rigid enforcement of the Port Bill, intimidation, and bribery of their leaders. On June 29 he therefore issued a proclamation denouncing the "Solemn League and Covenant" as illegal and ordering the arrest of all those who should circulate it or sign it. No one dared to try to enforce his edict. Gage was equally unsuccessful in efforts to do something toward the punishment of the radical leaders. He brought to the attention of the provincial attorney general the denunciation prepared by Thurlow and Wedderburn, but the attorney general declared that the time was not ripe for action.[5] Gage also tried to secure further evidence against those leaders, with very little success.[6] The only prosecution he undertook against the American principals was one against William Molineux, and that was based on the ground that Molineux had not paid a fine inflicted because he had failed to perform jury duty.[7] Even that case was not pushed to a ver-

[4] Alice Baldwin, *The New England Clergy and the American Revolution* (Durham, N.C., 1928), 122 n.

[5] On this point see *Gage Corr.*, I, 358.

[6] *Ibid.*, 359.

[7] Gage to Chief Justice Peter Oliver, July 28, 1774, Oliver to Gage, July 30, 1774, Gage MSS.

dict. The only American who was actually arrested was an inconspicuous man named Samuel Dyer who was too active in persuading troops to desert. He was sent to England, where he was released for lack of evidence. An endeavor to strike at John Hancock by depriving that vain person of his appointment as "Colonel" of a showy company of cadets who paraded on official occasions was equally fruitless. The cadets promptly disbanded in protest. An attempt made by the general shortly after the dismissal of the legislature to bribe Samuel Adams was not merely a failure—it was a farce. Adams received the offer of pelf, made through one Colonel Fenton, with outraged virtue and lofty indignation.[8]

As July passed, Gage made military preparations for trouble, sure to come after August 1, when the other acts passed by Parliament to bring Massachusetts to heel were scheduled to go into force. By the end of the first week of July he had five regiments in Boston, four from the British Isles, one from New York, and also a few artillerymen. As early as June 26 he was making preparations to bring in two more regiments. On July 14 he ordered one from Halifax and another from New York, both of which reached Boston late in August. He told Haldimand that "We are threatened here with an open opposition by arms every day, but tho' I don't credit it, I would be prepared against it." [9] Whether he then believed he could intimidate Massachusetts is not clear. In any case, he was already "sick of his task." [10] Indeed, on August 20 there was a widespread rumor in Philadelphia, probably without solid foundation, that he had requested leave to return home or to resign his commission.[11] Since no other evidence of such a request is known, the rumor

[8] The only evidence for this attempt is a statement by Adams' daughter in 1818. There seems to be no particular reason to doubt her statement. From Gage's point of view it was legitimate to offer bribes, as he did later to Dr. Benjamin Church.

[9] Gage to Haldimand, July 14, 1774, Gage MSS.

[10] According to William Smith, Jr., who was in correspondence with his nephew, Maturin, Gage's secretary. Smith to Philip Schuyler, July 23, 1774, Schuyler Papers, New York Public Library.

[11] *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography,* XXXIII (1909), 442.

may have arisen from an expression by Gage of dissatisfaction with his lot.

Meanwhile, the Port Bill had been duly put into effect, with Admiral Samuel Graves, commanding officer on the North American naval station, the customs officials, and Gage cooperating to ensure its enforcement. Business activity had immediately slackened in Boston and widespread unemployment had resulted. Actual want, however, was prevented, for food supplies were sent in by Americans from near and far, and the town officials saw to it that they were given to those in need. On August 6 arrived in Boston those other punitive acts passed by the Parliament, so long expected. These laws provided for important changes in the government of the colony. Henceforth the members of the council, hitherto chosen by the assembly and the governor, were to be chosen by the crown. Appointments and removals of judges, sheriffs, and other minor officials were to be the business of the governor solely. Jurors were to be summoned for the future from panels prepared by the sheriffs rather than by the freeholders. Each town was to be allowed no more than one official meeting each year to elect officers, except that others might be permitted by the governor. The intention of these acts is obvious: the system of government in Massachusetts was to be made less "democratic" and less American, more aristocratic and more British. Massachusetts was no longer to have greater freedom than the other royal colonies in America. In addition, the Intolerable Acts gave the governor and his council on the new plan authority to send to another colony or to England for trial any person who might be accused of crime as the result of efforts to enforce the laws. Since Gage already had in his pocket a complete pardoning power, there could not be another Preston affair. There was also a new Quartering Act to enable him to house his troops at the expense of Massachusetts.[12] Along with copies of these acts, came the appoint-

[12] Of course, Gage needed to take no action in Massachusetts to enforce the Quebec Act.

ment of Thomas Oliver as lieutenant governor and a list of new councilors drawn up in London.

The Intolerable Acts in theory undoubtedly had Gage's full approval. He had ardently urged changes in the Massachusetts charter in favor of the crown as early as 1769, and he had long believed that Connecticut and Rhode Island should be deprived of their semi-independence within the empire.[13] It will be recalled that almost twenty years earlier he had favored abolishing the proprietary governments. Nevertheless, he knew it would be an ugly job to enforce the acts, if indeed, they could be enforced. He went to work promptly to revise the system of government in his colony. On August 8 he had sworn in at Salem several of the new royal councilors. Eight days later he had the oath of office administered to a larger group. Out of thirty-six persons on his list twenty-four were ready for business at that time, and he held a formal meeting to consider various matters. It was decided to call the General Court into session early in October, and writs of election were signed soon afterward. However, little else was done, for the radicals promptly and boldly challenged the new regime. They prevented several men appointed to the new council from taking office by threats of ostracism, economic reprisal, and physical violence; they forced others to resign; still others they compelled to flee to Boston for safety. In western and southwestern Massachusetts they announced that they would not permit the courts to open with defenders of royal authority serving as judges and sheriffs and controlling the selection of jurors. They began to gather arms in those areas and swore they would oppose any troops who might be sent to support the civil officers. By August 27 the situation was exceedingly grave. At that time Captain John Montresor, so he tells us, warned Gage that he was personally in danger while he remained in the neighborhood of Salem. Whether Montresor's warning was taken seriously by the general is not clear, but Gage decided to leave the house of Robert

[13] Gage to Barrington, August 27, 1774 (Private), Gage MSS.

Hooper at Danvers, where he had made his home for some weeks.[14] He removed to Boston, where he was to remain until his command in America ended.

There can be no question that Gage saw the situation in Massachusetts in very somber colors on August 27. Writing to Barrington that day, he said there would be no peace in America until the radical leaders were arrested and sent to England. He argued that the British government should use the whip. Such action might well lead to bloodshed. The First Continental Congress, which was about to meet, could be ignored, for that "motley crew" could only talk and threaten economic warfare. The middle colonies, he contended, could not be seduced into open warfare. Nor need there be any worry, declared Gage, about the southern people. They "talk very high," he said, ". . . but they can do nothing, their numerous slaves in the bowells of their country, and the Indians at their backs will always keep them quiet." The New Englanders were not to be despised in a military way, but "you wou'd be able to overcome them, no doubt, in a year or two, and the affair is over and settled." [15] In an official letter to Dartmouth written at the same time Gage indicated more cautiously the desperate situation in Massachusetts.[16] If he really believed in March, 1774, that he could police Boston with four regiments, he had no illusions about an easy conquest of New England at the end of August.

Gage's removal to Boston, whatever the exact reasons for it, was obviously dictated in large part by a desire to be able to use his troops quickly in case of need. In Boston he learned for certain that the situation was grave. There he found some of his councilors who had fled toward the troops for asylum; there he learned that one of that body had been sorely threatened with

[14] The Montresor Journals, *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1881* (New York, 1882), 123; The Kemble Papers, *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1883*, 39.

[15] Gage to Barrington, Aug. 27, 1774 (Private), Gage MSS.

[16] *Gage Corr.*, I, 365–68.

death and shamefully treated by a mob in Connecticut; there he was informed that people were holding meetings—town, country, and mass—everywhere in Massachusetts, in spite of British law. At Salem he had hit upon the idea of leading a detachment of troops into Worcester to the aid of civil officials so that they could carry on the business of government. In Boston the idea seemed a dangerous one. His councilors told him that the courts in Worcester, and for that matter elsewhere in the colony and even in Boston, could not legally be operated, even with military power present to assure order, since there was no way to force jurors to serve. Moreover, both Gage and his advisers came quickly to believe that the advance of a detachment toward Worcester would meet armed resistance and that the radicals in eastern Massachusetts would then cut off its retreat. Gage did not have sufficient men to precipitate a struggle. He therefore prudently decided to gather as much strength as possible in Boston and to make that place a refuge for those friendly to royal authority.[17]

If Gage did not desire an armed struggle at this time, he did nevertheless take one rather risky step. Under his orders, about 250 regulars set out early in the morning of September 1 for Cambridge, where there were stored 125 barrels of powder in a provincial "Powder House." The commanding officer had been instructed to remove the powder, most or all of which belonged to the colony, to Boston. He did his job, and the powder, which might have fallen into the hands of the radicals, was reserved for the use of the troops. As governor Gage possessed the legal right to remove provincial property, but the brief march of the regulars aroused the whole colony. Everywhere outside of Boston, on the assumption that the British were marching into the country, men flew to arms. By the morning of September 2 thousands of men had gathered about the town. There was much talk to the effect that the regulars would be destroyed if they moved out of the town, and prominent radicals rejoiced

[17] *Ibid.*, 370.

in their strength. However, Gage wisely kept his men in Boston. Meanwhile, mob violence rose to new heights in the country. At Cambridge three more members of the council, one of them the lieutenant governor, Thomas Oliver, were frightened into resigning their posts by the menaces of a vast concourse of aroused defenders of liberty. Benjamin Hallowell, one of the hated Commissioners of Customs, had an even more harrowing experience. He happened to pass through Cambridge in his coach at the height of the excitement and immediately became an object of undesired public attention. Some Boston radicals who recognized him shouted, "Dam you how do you like us now you Tory son of a bitch?" (At least Hallowell thus described their language a few days later.) Scores of men took to horse and pursued him, but all except one dropped the chase at the urging of one of their leaders who suggested that they reserve themselves for bigger game. Hallowell fired a pistol at his lone persecutor, then abandoned his coach, and made his way in wild excitement into Boston upon his servant's horse.[18]

The ominous state of affairs in Massachusetts and Connecticut in the latter part of August and the first days of September persuaded Gage that further military measures were necessary. On September 3 he began to fortify Boston Neck so as better to meet a possible attack from the mainland. Within the forty-eight hours following he ordered General Haldimand to join him as quickly as possible with all available men from New York and he sent a hurry call to Colonel Valentine Jones at Quebec telling that officer to bring the tenth and fifty-second regiments by sea to Boston, unless Governor Guy Carleton should insist those troops were absolutely necessary for the defense of Canada.[19] Gage also began to build barracks for his troops, since it was clear that they would be compelled to remain in Boston

[18] There is an interesting account of the events of September 1–2 by Oliver Elton in his article, "Lieutenant Governor Thomas Oliver, 1734–1815," *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Transactions, 1930–1933*, XXVIII (1934), 37–66. Hallowell tells his story in a letter to Gage, Sept. 8, 1774, Gage MSS.

[19] Gage to Valentine Jones, Sept. 4, 1774, Gage to Haldimand, Sept. 5, 1774, Gage MSS.

for many weeks, perhaps for many months. In spite of efforts by Massachusetts patriots—patriots would seem to be a proper term for Gage's opponents after the events just described—to prevent supplies from reaching the army and to convince carpenters and laborers that they should not work for the crown, the fortifications were steadily made stronger and the barracks rose almost as rapidly.

It may be contended by those who view every British act with suspicion that these measures were unnecessary and that they were merely new and inexcusable steps to fasten the arbitrary and tyrannical rule of Britain over America. So American leaders argued at the time. Many committees approached Gage and asked that he give up the idea of fortifying Boston. Such men as Dr. Joseph Warren and Dr. Benjamin Church, most passionate leaders of the American cause who served on these committees, insisted to Gage that there was no thought of attacking the British troops. He was polite upon such occasions, but resolutely refused to comply with their demands. It is obvious that he thought hostilities might break out at any time and that he considered his meager force of seven regiments to be safe only behind fortified barriers and with the sea and the navy at their backs. If he was right in concluding that there was real danger of shooting, his precautions testify that he exercised good military judgment. And, indeed, it is difficult to deny that he had reasons for alarm. All through September there was talk in Massachusetts of re-establishing the old charter which had been destroyed by the British government in 1684, that charter under which Massachusetts had managed almost to ignore England. There was also talk of reorganizing the provincial government to its previous state before the attempted execution of the Intolerable Acts. Men were drilling and were gathering arms outside of Boston. The famous Suffolk County Convention, organized to circumvent the prohibition upon town meetings, boldly declared in its famous resolutions of September 9 that force should, if necessary, be used to prevent

the enslavement of America and even hinted that the patriots would take the aggressive if it were required for their own safety.

Additional evidence that Gage's precautions were not without justification accumulated as summer passed into fall. Although the general canceled his call for a provincial assembly, elections were held and patriot delegates, formally and informally chosen, appeared at Salem at the appointed time, October 5. It was assumed that Gage had no right to withdraw his call. When he did not appear at Salem, the delegates immediately formed themselves into a Provincial Congress, which promptly began to conduct itself as if it were the legal government of Massachusetts. It chose a president, John Hancock. On October 26, after receiving a report that the First Continental Congress had approved the Suffolk Resolutions and that it had promised the support of all America in the event of British aggression, this body appointed an executive committee of public safety. Later it appointed a committee of military supplies and three officers to command the Massachusetts militia. In addition, it chose a receiver-general, who was to accept the usual taxes and to disburse public money. In so doing the patriots created a revolutionary government, no matter what their legal justifications. They would have done more, had they been assured that the First Continental Congress would back them up.

Nor were events in Massachusetts the only ones which gave Gage much food for thought. The First Continental Congress, which he had predicted would do nothing of importance, was far more vigorous in its assertion of American rights than he had ever expected. It did not confine itself to its sanction of the Suffolk Resolutions. It demanded that Parliament abandon its attempts to raise a revenue in America and that the right of the colonists to legislate regarding their domestic affairs be fully recognized, and it called for an absolute cessation of commerce between America and Britain and the nonuse of British-made goods until such time as Parliament should repeal its ob-

noxious laws. The First Continental Congress would have gone to even greater lengths, had it followed the ideas of Samuel Adams and John Adams. However, many of the delegates were suspicious of the intentions of the Massachusetts people. There was a rather widespread and not unfounded fear in that body that the Adamses and their friends were trying to precipitate hostilities. In fact, if a statement made by John Adams in 1777 is to be believed, the Congress actually received and positively rejected a petition from Boston asking permission to attack and destroy Gage's forces.[20] Most of the members of the Congress wished to pursue an aggressive course in the way of propaganda and economic warfare but a purely defensive policy in the matter of physical force. Thus the Congress refused its consent to a resolution introduced by John Adams which would have made the seizure of patriots in Massachusetts by Gage the equivalent of a declaration of war against America.[21]

[20] Charles Francis Adams (ed.), *The Works of John Adams . . .*, 10 vols. (Boston, 1856), IX, 459.

[21] *Ibid.*, II, 391.

CHAPTER XIII

Armed Truce in New England

WHAT DID Gage do, beyond making his military preparations, to meet the crisis which arose in the late summer of 1774? He took great care not to force an armed clash; he reported the situation to Barrington and Dartmouth; he offered his opinion as to the course Britain should pursue; and he requested orders from home.

Gage had no intention of beginning a war in America upon his own. He displayed the prudence and coolness for which he was so well known. He was not only polite to delegations of Americans who sought him out; he was even gracious. He was always willing to listen to them, as long as he was not asked to recognize such delegations as legal organizations. He was far more approachable, as American radicals noted, than Hutchinson had been.[1] To all expressions of concern and suspicion regarding his plans and his actions, whether they came from local committees or from Peyton Randolph, president of the First Continental Congress, he replied that he had no intention of attacking the Americans.[2] He kept his men under strict discipline, and he worked with the officials of Boston to prevent

[1] On this point see for example, Josiah Quincy, *Memoirs of the Life of Josiah Quincy Jun* . . . (Boston, 1825), 202, 207.

[2] Gage to committee of County of Worcester, Nov. 14, 1774, Gage to committee of Massachusetts Provincial Congress, Nov., 1774, Gage to Randolph, Oct. 20, 1774, Gage MSS.

clashes between them and the townspeople. If there was to be armed conflict, he would let the Americans or the British government begin it.

In his "private" letters to Barrington in the last four months of 1774 describing the change in affairs in America, Gage wrote like a prophet of doom. On September 25 he bluntly declared that Britain must realize that the Intolerable Acts had been taken as a challenge not only in Massachusetts but in all America.[3] A week later he told his friend that Britain could not have her own way with America except by conquering, "and to do that effectually, to prevent further bickerings, you should have an army near twenty thousand strong composed of regulars, a large body of good irregulars such as the German Huntsmen, picked, Canadians &ca, and three or four regiments of light horse, these exclusive of a good and sufficient field artillery."[4] On November 2 he wrote still more forcefully. New England, he was certain, would fight rather than give in to old England. The rest of America, he implied, would join New England. He wrote: ". . . if you resist and not yield [to the American demands], that resistance should be effectual at the beginning. If you think ten thousand men sufficient, send twenty, if one million is thought enough, give two; you will save both blood and treasure in the end. A large force will terrify, and engage many to join you, a middling one will encourage resistance, and gain no friends. The crisis is indeed an alarming one, & Britain had never more need of wisdom, firmness, and union than at this juncture."[5] A fortnight later Gage again argued that coercion should not be attempted through the use of the army except with very large forces. He indicated the possibility of backing up British supremacy with a naval blockade. If such a measure were adopted, he insisted that a small body of troops should not be left exposed on the mainland. He also expressed a forlorn hope that the British government would find nonmili-

[3] *Gage Corr.*, II, 654–55.
[4] *Ibid.*, 656.
[5] *Ibid.*, 658–59.

tary means to support its position in America.[6] On December 14 Gage opened his heart fully, indicating that he himself favored coercion by the army. "I hope you will be firm, and send me a sufficient force to command the country, by marching into it, and sending off large detachments to secure obedience thro' every part of it; affairs are at a crisis, and if you give way it is for ever." [7]

The official letters which Gage sent to Dartmouth during the same period were equally gloomy about the situation in America. On September 25 he told the minister that it might have helped at an earlier time to arrest the principals among the American radicals, but that an attempt to seize them would now be the signal for hostilities. In the same letter he said that he had forwarded other ideas about the state of affairs in a private letter to Hutchinson of September 17, implying that Dartmouth would do well to read that document. Obviously, Gage wished to express a definite opinion for the benefit of the minister without committing himself officially. The document sent to Hutchinson was startling enough. Gage said that the worst could be expected from New England. Government would do well to suspend the Intolerable Acts and to ask Massachusetts to send emissaries to London. Meanwhile, if it intended to enforce its claims of authority in America, government should hire Hanoverians and Hessians, for a powerful army would be needed to subdue the Americans.[8] Again and again in succeeding reports to Dartmouth during the following three months Gage indicated that the colonists would not bend before Parliament, that New England would fight rather than yield, and that the colonies to the southward would probably come to the assistance of the Yankees. Britain would have to use force if she insisted upon the supremacy of Parliament. In these official letters the general would not say that Britain should appeal to Mars. Otherwise, Gage's letters to Dartmouth were similar to those he sent to

[6] *Ibid.*, 661.
[7] *Ibid.*, 663.
[8] *Ibid.*, I, 375–76; *Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Fourteenth Report, Appendix, Part X, 226.

Barrington. Government must decide what to do. If he were ordered to take the field, he should be given large forces, twenty thousand men, including cavalry, for his task would not be easy. As an alternative method of coercion he suggested a complete naval blockade of the American coast, coupled with a total withdrawal of the army and of British officials from the Old Thirteen. He told Dartmouth as he did Barrington that the small army which he then had provoked rather than terrified the Americans.[9] It is a strange fact that many writers have pictured Gage as telling his superiors in London at this time that it would be an easy matter to conquer the Americans. No man was more aware of the true situation than he was.

While Gage was penning his reports to London, his military position in Boston was somewhat improved by the arrival of reinforcements. In October there reached Boston from Quebec the tenth and fifty-second regiments, from New York the eighteenth and forty-seventh, and from Newfoundland two companies of the sixty-fifth ordered to join Gage by Commodore Molyneux Shuldham, who acted on his own initiative. By the end of that month the general calculated that he had the use of nearly three thousand men, excluding a regiment which would be needed to garrison Castle William.[10] On December 12 the warships *Asia* and *Boyne* entered Boston Harbor from Great Britain. Under orders from the cabinet they brought to Gage's assistance about four hundred Royal Marines. Since Gage received no further help until after the War of Independence had begun, we may safely calculate that he had available for action in Boston not more than 3,500 men when hostilities began. Truly this was no mighty force to beat down an enraged people.

Insofar as the final decision of the British government regarding America proceeded from Gage's reports, it was based on the letters previously mentioned, written before the end of

[9] See Gage's letters to Dartmouth, Sept. 25—Dec. 15, 1774, *Gage Corr.*, I, 376–88.

[10] *Ibid.*, 383.

1774, for that final decision was apparently made in January, 1775. It was not known to Gage until the following April. Nevertheless, the War of Independence could have begun at any time between September, 1774, and April, 1775, through some unfortunate incident, through an attack upon the British troops by enraged Americans, or through aggression on the part of the army. That the war did not actually break out until April 19, 1775, was in large part due to the good sense and caution of General Gage.

Incidents which might have led to serious bloodshed were not lacking in Boston after September, 1774. On October 18 Samuel Dyer, returned from England, clashed with two officers in Boston. According to the officers, Dyer twice attempted to fire pistols at them and actually wounded one of them slightly with his own sword. Evidently Dyer was a rather doughty fighter. On the twelfth of the following month there was a similar fracas between a pair of officers and some patriots armed with long poles studded with spikes or bills. Profanity and blows were exchanged freely, and again a redcoat, Captain Hugh Magenis, was slightly injured. Four weeks later a Lieutenant Myers of the thirty-eighth engaged in verbal abuse and fisticuffs with a civilian. A mob gathered to befriend the civilian, whereupon the main guard appeared to restore order. The guard dispersed the mob at bayonet's point. Meanwhile, Myers was arrested by the town watch and thrown into jail, but he was released soon afterward at the demand of Gage. On January 31 still another street quarrel broke out, between Lieutenant Thomas Hawkshaw and one Philip Bass. Bass asserted that Hawkshaw gave him a sword wound in the arm. The officer claimed to be innocent. March 8 brought another nasty episode when Thomas Ditson, an unsophisticated and rural individual, tried to induce a soldier to desert. Ditson suffered for his ignorance, for a band of soldiers gave him the treatment patriots had so often handed out to Tories. Before Gage could move to protect him, Ditson was tarred and feathered, and carried

through the streets of the town in a cart. Had it not been for co-operation between Gage and the town officials, there would have been more of these troubles; indeed, one of them might have precipitated the war.

None of these incidents was so likely to bring on hostilities as the celebration of the anniversary of the Boston Massacre. Even under British guns Samuel Adams, John Hancock, Dr. Joseph Warren, and their friends insisted upon the commemoration of that untoward event by an oration in honor of the dead. A town meeting scheduled the oration for March 6, since the fifth fell upon a Sunday, and chose Warren as the speaker and the Old South Church as the place. Inevitably a crowd gathered. People even came in from the country to see the British lion goaded in his lair. They were not disappointed, for Warren delivered a thundering denunciation of British policies. Nor were Warren's references to the Massacre those of a cautious or scholarly man. The whole procedure was sure to arouse British tempers, and it did. About forty officers attended, presumably in an unofficial attempt to cow the orator into using more moderate language than was commonly employed in the anniversary speeches. Of course, the officers were annoyed, and they indicated their displeasure by hissing and by drumming their canes on the floor. At the end of the meeting hard looks and a threat or two were exchanged, but there was no disorder. An attempt by the officers to lay hands upon Warren or any other leader of the patriots undoubtedly would have had the most serious consequences.

There was little likelihood that the more prominent patriots in New England would sanction a large-scale attack upon the troops. It was still possible that the British government would bend before America. Also, it would have been poor policy to assume the responsibility for taking the aggressive, for an attack by the New Englanders might jeopardize support from the middle and southern colonies. The patriots needed as solid a front as possible, in the event of an armed struggle. Neverthe-

less, when news reached Boston early in December that the British crown had forbidden the export to America of guns and ammunition, the Boston radicals ventured to take an extraordinary step. They sent the news by Paul Revere to their friends in New Hampshire, and we may assume that they recommended drastic action. In any case, drastic action was taken. Fort William and Mary at Portsmouth contained about one hundred barrels of powder belonging to the crown, a number of muskets, and a few cannon. It was weakly guarded by Captain John Cochran and five men. On December 14 several hundred men approached the fort and demanded that it be turned over to them. The captain refused, and the garrison fired a cannon ball or two and a few musket shots in defense of the fort. However, not a shot took effect, and the garrison was soon forced to surrender. Cochran was slightly wounded in the melee. The powder within the fort thereupon became the property of the New Hampshire patriots, who later re-entered the fort and carried off some small arms as well. These affairs had no disastrous results, since Gage would do no more than join with Admiral Graves in sending a ship with some marines to the harbor off Portsmouth to assure the safety of the royal governor, John Wentworth. Wentworth asked for two regiments to re-establish royal authority in his province. Gage at first consented to send a body of regulars and set about making arrangements. On second thought he decided the troops would be needed more in Boston.[11]

Of course, Gage himself had no intention of forcing a conflict by using his troops. The fateful decision that must be made by the British regarding America was the business of government and not his. His job was to execute measures, not to choose them. Who in Boston in the winter of 1774–75 could say with certainty what government actually desired? If Gage had taken the road of battle when his superiors de-

[11] Gage to Wentworth, Jan. 5, 1775, Jan. 24, 1775, Feb. 3, 1775, Feb. 23, 1775, Gage MSS.; Elwyn L. Page, "The King's Powder, 1774," *New England Quarterly*, XVII (1945), 83–92.

sired conciliation, he would have assumed a responsibility heavier than any ever assumed before by a British colonial official. Had Gage taken such an extraordinary step, he would have been a gambler for the very highest stakes—stakes including his own reputation and his own career. Besides, the modest general did not pretend to know what to do about America. And finally, he knew what was not generally known in Britain, that a war would be a desperate affair.[12]

It is true that Gage did some things in the early months of 1775 which might have ended in an open clash. On February 26, for example, he sent Lieutenant Colonel Leslie to Salem with two hundred regulars to destroy cannon which supposedly had been shipped there from Europe for use against the British army. Minutemen gathered to oppose Leslie, and shooting was probably avoided only because he was careful not to move beyond a line laid down by the patriots. He found no cannon in the town. It should be emphasized, however, that Gage sent out Leslie because of specific orders received from Dartmouth, not upon his own initiative.[13] Certain other actions of Gage which might be described as only mildly venturesome were taken by the general as the result of his own decisions. Late in January he sent one hundred men to Marshfield to protect the Tories of that place and of Scituate who had begged him for protection. It may well be argued he could hardly do otherwise than try to support the friends of England. No untoward effects appeared. By March, Gage had hit upon another device which was somewhat more risky. He was sending out fairly

[12] Gage did not need the good advice sent him by his old friend Sir Joseph Yorke, ambassador to the Netherlands. Wrote Yorke affectionately on November 4: "The eyes of all Europe are upon you at present, & tho' I trust you will be able to save both countries, yet I cannot look upon the arduous scene you are employ'd in without anxiety; it is not enough always to mean well oneself, whilst the many-headed monster of faction is opening all its mouths to envenom the best conduct; you have my best wishes & those of every honest man for your success. Be assured that you have not a friend whose heart will feel more joy in hearing of it. . . ." Yorke was obviously warning Gage not only against American machinations, but also against the government which both men served. His letter is in the Gage MSS.

[13] *Gage Corr.*, II, 176–77.

considerable bodies of men on marches in the immediate vicinity of Boston, supposedly for purposes of training. Sometimes these troops marched out as far as eight miles from the town. They minded their own business and were not molested by the patriots, although a careful watch was kept upon them so that British troops would not be able to march inland without warning. Obviously, Gage was then anticipating that he might be ordered to take the field and was doing what he could to accustom his men and the Massachusetts people to a British march into the country.

If Gage was careful not to cause a conflict on his own initiative, he was certainly preparing for one in the early months of 1775. He was not only exercising his troops; he was trying to find out the plans and actions of the patriots and to learn the nature of the country around Boston so that the troops, if ordered to march, could act with the greatest efficiency. As early as January he requested officers and troops familiar with Massachusetts to report to Stephen Kemble, in charge of intelligence, for special duty. He sent out Captain John Brown on at least one scouting trip. Under his orders Lieutenant John De Berniere, a veteran officer of Gage's old regiment, the forty-fourth, made two journeys toward Concord in search of information. If a remark made later by the Marquis of Chastellux is accepted as accurate, Major Thomas Pitcairn, commanding officer of the Royal Marines, undertook a similar exploration. Another of Gage's scouts was one John Howe, an English civilian, who traveled as far inland as Worcester. All of these men no doubt brought back useful data of one sort and another.

Even more valuable to Gage as a source of information was some person who had direct access to the patriot headquarters at Concord, where the Provincial Congress and its committees held forth after February. Dr. Benjamin Church, an American who was definitely in Gage's pay after the beginning of the war, was probably that person. Because Church had been one of the hottest of the patriots, even serving as the orator at one of

the celebrations of the Boston Massacre anniversary, he was a trusted man in the American ranks. As a member of the Congress he could easily have furnished accurate accounts of the hopes and fears and projects of the provincial delegates. Whether or not Church was Gage's man at this time, such accurate accounts did come into the general's hands.[14] Another informant operating in and near Concord also labored most successfully for Gage. Who he was remains a mystery, but a number of memoranda containing the fruits of his toil and written in astonishingly bad French are still to be found in Gage's papers. These strange documents give a very clear picture of the military equipment and stores gathered by the patriots at Concord and neighboring towns between February and April. Whoever this informer was, he gave names, dates, places, and quantities with rather surprising precision. Gage may have had more than two spies at Concord. In any case, he knew what was going on among the patriot leaders for many weeks before the War of Independence. An interesting sample of the information which came to Gage is contained in one of those memoranda in French dated April 14: [15] "Last Saturday the 7th of April P:- R:- toward evening arrived at Concord, carrying a letter that was said to be from Mr. W——n." Evidently Paul Revere could not carry a letter from Dr. Joseph Warren and take a jaunt on horseback to Concord without being observed.[16]

Nor were Gage's preparations for conflict confined to acquiring information. On April 5 he called upon Admiral Graves for assistance in finding out the best way by which troops could be moved from Boston across the bay to a spot from which they could readily march inland. As a result, the admiral promptly had many small boats prepared and lowered by the sides of his

[14] That Church was a traitor cannot now be seriously doubted. See Allen French, *General Gage's Informers* . . . (Ann Arbor, 1932), Chapter V. The same authority has offered evidence indicating that Church was sending information to Gage before as well as after the outbreak of hostilities.

[15] These documents are in the Gage MSS.

[16] Gage's intelligence memoranda bearing military data have been ably discussed in French, *General Gage's Informers*, Chapter I.

ships so that transportation would be available at any time that the general was ready to move.

Long before these arrangements were made, Gage was warning British officials everywhere in North America to be ready for the worst. He told John Stuart and Guy Johnson, the Indian superintendents, to make sure that the Indian tribes everywhere gave their loyalty to the crown and not to the rebellious colonists. The superintendents were not ordered to persuade their Indian friends to take the warpath as soon as hostilities should begin on the seaboard. Nevertheless, Stuart and Johnson were to see to it that the redskins would be ready to move against the frontiers in case the king should desire their assistance.[17] Gage also made arrangements with Governor Guy Carleton so that supplies could be sent to the northern Indians via the St. Lawrence in case of need.[18] To Colonel John Caldwell, commanding officer at Niagara, who had reported that the savages in the neighborhood of his post were uneasy, Gage gave even more forceful instructions. Caldwell was to tell those Indians that if they must attack, those who had injured them should be the sufferers, not the king's troops. If they assailed their enemies among the frontiersmen, but not the redcoats, they would continue to receive their supplies as in the past.[19] Gage was almost, though not quite, encouraging Caldwell to stimulate frontier conflict. Gage was also warning Captain William De La Place, commandant at Ticonderoga, to be on his guard against a surprise attack by the patriots, especially because De La Place had noticed undue patriot curiosity about Ticonderoga. Gage was exceedingly anxious to assure the line of communication between Montreal and New York.[20] Alas for this precaution on Gage's part, De La Place did later permit himself to be surprised and his fort to be taken.

[17] Gage to Stuart, Dec. 28, 1774, Gage to Johnson, Feb. 5, 1775, Gage MSS.

[18] Carleton to Gage, Feb. 4, 1775 (Secret), *ibid.*

[19] Gage to John Caldwell, March 4, 1775, *ibid.*

[20] Gage to William De La Place, March 8, 1775, *ibid.*

What was Gage thinking about the American problem during those last interminable weeks while he waited for his superiors to tell him what he must do? His correspondence indicates that he was indeed a very worried man. Certainly he remained thoroughly convinced that Britain should not back down. On January 25 he described the resolutions of the First Continental Congress to Barrington as "the terms of a conqueror to a vanquished nation" and expressed a hope that they would rouse "the indignation of the whole kingdom." At that time he was more hopeful than previously that the Americans would not offer serious resistance if Britain should use force.[21] On February 5 and 6 he was expressing the same sentiments to several correspondents. He was more optimistic about the situation than before, he indicated, because the New York assembly had refused to give its full support to the actions of the First Continental Congress, although the economic warfare recommended by that body was carried on everywhere throughout the colonies. Too, his hopes were raised by the fact that some of the Americans began to shrink as an armed conflict appeared ever more likely. He made it clear that he would not rejoice in the triumphs of a conqueror, should they come to him. He wanted "these unnatural disputes" ended, and hoped for a settlement "agreeable to the sentiments and wishes of every moderate man, and the real friends of both countrys." [22] Gage clearly desired that the most forcible means be used to teach the Americans that they must recognize the authority of Parliament. Obviously, he wanted them to bend the knee without fighting. Even if, however, they should fight and be defeated, he wished to offer decent treatment to them—decent, at least, according to his lights. He did not have in him the stuff of which true oppressors are made.

Soon afterward Gage learned through letters from Barring-

[21] Gage to Barrington, Jan. 25, 1775 (Private), *ibid.*

[22] Gage to Cadwallader Colden, Feb. 5, 1775, Gage to John Wentworth, Feb. 6, 1775, Gage to James Robertson, Feb. 6, 1775, *ibid.*

ton written on November 29 and December 6 [23] that in all likelihood the government would not bow before the colonists as it had in regard to the Stamp Act and the Townshend Acts. By February 10 Gage expected that his next instructions from home would require him "to make many preparations to act offensively" and to move eventually from Boston into the interior.[24] He continued to be hopeful during the remainder of February that the Americans would not offer too serious resistance. As late as February 26 he still believed that the majority in the New York assembly might stand out against the radicals and prevent the patriots from forming a united front, that New York might earn the distinction of "the Loyal Province," and that the assemblymen might become "the Saviours of America." [25] But this relatively optimistic viewpoint did not endure. On March 8 he was again truly pessimistic, declaring that a firm stand by government would very likely be followed by the "horrors of a civil war." [26] In the last "private" letter he wrote to Barrington before the outbreak of hostilities, on March 28,[27] he voiced the same ideas which he had so often stated before. "Its beyond my capacity to judge what ought to be done, but it appears to me that you are now making your final efforts respecting America; If you yield, I conceive that you have not a spark of authority remaining over this country. If you determine on the contrary to support your measures, it should be done with as little delay as possible, and as powerfully as you are able, for its easier to crush evils in their infancy than when grown to maturity."

From the beginning of his service as governor of Massachusetts, Gage, on the basis of his official correspondence, seems consistently to have believed that the supremacy of Parliament over America must be maintained, at whatever cost. It is true that his suggestion of September, 1774, that Britain invite commissioners from Massachusetts to come to London, can possibly

[23] Gage MSS.
[24] *Gage Corr.*, II, 669.
[25] Gage to Colden, Feb. 26, 1775, Gage MSS.
[26] Gage to Carleton, March 8, 1775, *ibid.*
[27] *Gage Corr.*, II, 671–72.

be construed as an effort to induce negotiations in which Britain might yield in some degree to colonial demands. However, Gage made that suggestion, as he himself said, to gain time so as to make more effective preparations for coercion by military force. There is, therefore, nowhere in Gage's official papers any clear statement at any time to the effect that he favored, even for a moment, a policy of concessions to America which would involve the acceptance by Britain of American views regarding the proper relationship between the Mother Country and the colonies. He does indicate in that correspondence that Britain could conceivably adopt such a policy. Although he did not formally urge it, one inevitably wonders whether he ever seriously considered doing so. It is certainly very doubtful that Gage, if he ever heard of it, gave much thought to advice offered him by Tom Paine, the famous propagandist. In the *Pennsylvania Journal* of January 4, 1775, Paine printed a remarkable account of an interview in a wood near Boston between Gage and the ghost of James Wolfe. Wolfe, supposedly commissioned to seek out Gage by a group of Gage's old friends among the shades, including the Duke of Cumberland and the Marquis of Granby, tells Gage that his own capture of Quebec was motivated by a desire to spread the blessings of liberty and that Gage's former comrades wish that he, too, would strike a blow for freedom. They all agree that Gage, acting as a citizen rather than as a mere soldier, should resign his commission and inform George III that he does so because British policy is directed against liberty—surely an amazing recommendation from Cumberland and Granby, if not from Wolfe. By so doing Gage would "restore perpetual harmony between Britain and her colonies." [28] While it is clear that such a step on Gage's part might have forced Britain to adopt a more moderate course toward America than she actually did and that it might possibly have led to a rapprochement between Britain and America on a basis of sub-

[28] Moncure Daniel Conway (ed.), *The Writings of Thomas Paine*, 4 vols. (New York and London, 1894–96), I, 10–13.

stantial equality within the empire, it seems most unlikely that Gage's expressed views of the British-American problem would permit him to attempt its solution along the lines suggested by Paine. It would appear that Gage did not consider resigning to force Britain to adopt a conciliatory policy, indeed that he did not consider resigning in order to escape from most perplexing and most onerous responsibilities. His views and his sense of duty forced him to execute any orders for coercion which might be sent to him.

CHAPTER XIV

The British Appeal to Mars

ON APRIL 14, 1775, a red-faced, stout young British army captain named Oliver De Lancey, a member of the New York De Lanceys and a cousin of Mrs. Gage, disembarked at Boston from H.M.S. *Nautilus*. He carried dispatches from London containing a copy of "Secret" orders to Gage of the greatest importance from the British cabinet. Two days later the original draft of the same orders reached Boston on board H.M.S. *Falcon*. De Lancey surely did not realize the momentousness of those instructions, for they brought on immediately the long-dreaded Anglo-American war and led eventually to the independence of the United States of America. De Lancey himself would in the end become an exile from his native land and would die in Britain because of them.[1] Government had consumed much time in reaching its fateful decision regarding America, and much more time than was usually needed to transmit dispatches had been required before that decision could be placed in the hands of Gage. Some might think that it would have been just as well if the papers bearing it had been lost at sea. Others might hold that their safe arrival was destined.

Strange as it may seem, almost five months passed after the

[1] De Lancey, only twenty-six years of age at this time, was a son of James De Lancey, who was for a time acting governor of New York. He was a rather wild, gay young blade who had studied—or at least sojourned—at Eton. He later rose to the rank of general in the British army.

beginning of the armed truce in Massachusetts before British politicians could make up their minds what they would do about America. Of course, they had to wait until they had learned what had occurred in the First Continental Congress, and time was consumed in transmitting news to London. Still further delay was caused by the fact that a new Parliament had just been elected. Lord North and his cabinet did not wish to move until the temper of that body had been analyzed. In addition, the Christmas holidays intervened. As a result, it was not until late in January that the cabinet definitely determined upon the policy which it would follow. The only instruction of any importance which Gage received from Dartmouth during the whole winter of 1774–75 was that which required him to prevent shipments of arms reaching New England from European ports. The only assistance sent to him was the contingent of marines under Pitcairn.

Certainly the British ministry did not consider seriously the recommendations of General Gage. As his letters came in one by one urging that coercion not be attempted unless maximum force were exerted, Gage's prestige sank very low among the politicians about the king. George III himself was exasperated by Gage's proposal that the government suspend the Intolerable Acts and temporize while preparing for a desperate struggle. He called that proposal "the most absurd that can be suggested." [2] The king and his friends in office were in no mood to retreat before the colonists. They were almost unanimously resolved that the colonists must either submit to the supremacy of Parliament or be chastised into obedience. But they would not believe that Gage needed large reinforcements before putting the Americans to the test. Indeed, with only two exceptions, they believed that Gage already had sufficient troops to beat the Americans into abject surrender.[3] Adjutant General Edward Harvey

[2] Fortescue (ed.), *The Correspondence of King George the Third*, III, 154.

[3] For example, on Lord North's attitude, see Hutchinson (ed.), *Diary and Letters of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson*, I, 297.

declared that Gage should be furnished large reinforcements promptly, or the soldiers should be withdrawn from Boston.[4] Barrington contended that the colonies should be reduced to submission by a naval blockade. If troops were used, he too argued that a great army should be sent to America.[5] However, neither Harvey nor Barrington had influence at this time. Eventually the king and his advisers did decide to send some additional troops, but they ordered Gage to take the offensive long before those troops reached America. Even when the cabinet did move toward raising a large army its efforts were too little and too late.

Nor were most government officials satisfied merely to differ from Gage in the matter of policy. Rather they voiced the most bitter criticism of his conduct in Massachusetts and demanded that he be recalled in disgrace. William Knox, undersecretary of state for the colonies, railed at Gage's weakness and timidity. Knox wished to hear that the Americans had resisted the king's troops. Then government would know what to do. John Pownall, also a confidential adviser upon colonial matters, expressed alarm and astonishment because of Gage's inactivity and irresolution. The Earl of Suffolk thought that Gage was "too far gone to be recovered." Attorney General Thurlow and Richard Jackson, an influential member of Parliament, blamed Gage for not suppressing "riots" in Massachusetts. Solicitor General Wedderburn, ignoring the fact that he had lacked courage to sign warrants for the arrest of Massachusetts radicals, told Thomas Hutchinson that the general should have dispersed the "mobs" and should have seized the American leaders.[6] Even Lord

[4] *Ibid.*, 317.

[5] Barrington to Gage, Jan. 3, 1775 (Private), Gage MSS. It is an interesting fact that Governor (and General) James Grant, who is reported to have expressed publicly contempt for American military prowess, also favored a naval blockade as the best means to reduce the Americans. Grant to James Wemyss, Dec. 16, 1774, Alexander Wedderburn MSS., I, William L. Clements Library.

[6] Hutchinson (ed.), *Diary and Letters of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson*, I, 295, 312, 353–54; *Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Eleventh Report, Appendix, Part V, 370, Fourteenth Report, Appendix, Part X, 233, 240.

Loudoun, whose own record hardly proved him to be a genius, military or otherwise, joined in the chorus of condemnation. As early as December 18 the king and high governmental officials were actually considering the replacement of Gage by Sir Jeffrey Amherst, who supposedly would act with greater vigor. The king, however, was considerate of Gage's feelings and would not permit an outright dismissal. Toward the end of January he proposed a plan whereby Gage would remain in office as governor of Massachusetts and Amherst would take over the command of the troops. Government would announce that this arrangement was necessary because Gage's presence in his colony was indispensable and because the soldiers would undoubtedly be compelled to function all over America.[7] This plan was not carried through, possibly because Amherst refused to leave England for an unpleasant job in America. It is also possible that Amherst wanted no part in a scheme which would hurt Gage. Instead, it was finally decided to send three major generals to assist Gage. William Howe, Henry Clinton, and John Burgoyne were the great leaders chosen.

If we admit that there was some reason to believe that a more capable military man than Gage could have been found in England, it is still true that the major generals who were sent to his aid were hardly better men than he. It should be emphasized that all the talk at this time about replacing Gage did not arise from his supposed military incompetence. Gage's superiors, except for Barrington who had no influence, were angry because he had been cautious and conciliatory and because he had told them that a policy of coercion would require the greatest possible concentration of military power. Nor did they like his assertions that the Americans were deadly serious in their opposition to Parliament. They did not like the plain truths which he sent them, and they did not wish to have the responsibility of deciding what to do about America. It would have been much

[7] *Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Thirteenth Report, Appendix, Part IV, 501, Fourteenth Report, Appendix, Part X, 240; Fortescue (ed.), *The Correspondence of George the Third*, III, 157, 168.

more pleasant for them if he had tried to find a solution to the American problem. Had he succeeded, they would have taken the credit. If he had failed, they would have made him the scapegoat.[8] It is interesting that Dartmouth also complained at the end of 1774 and again in the summer of 1775 because Gage had not sent in complete reports. Some writers have taken these complaints at face value. The fact is that Gage's reports, though not lengthy, were clear, truthful, and adequate. It is equally interesting that William Knox was exceedingly anxious in December that Gage's letters should not be called for by Parliament [9] and that Parliament was not fully informed about the contents of those letters. The criticism which the king's ministers and their aides heaped upon Gage in the winter of 1774–75 was very largely undeserved. Amusingly enough, all this criticism was private. Nothing was said in Parliament about Gage's incompetence. As late as December 6, Barrington, who was obviously not on the inside at this time, wrote to his friend that everyone in Parliament voiced toward him "the strongest expressions of esteem and regard. . . ." There was not, said Barrington, "the least insinuation of blame in any part of your conduct since your arrival in Boston." [10] Barrington knew enough about the state of affairs, however, to be sorry for Gage. "I pity, dear sir, the situation you are in," he wrote to Gage on December 31, "tho' I know you will act wisely and honourably in it." [11]

On January 25, 1775, Thomas Hutchinson in London wrote in his diary that Lord Dartmouth had that day told him that "meas-

[8] The awkwardness of Gage's position was recognized by his friend James Abercrombie as early as September, 1774. Abercrombie then wrote to Gage: "I am extreamly sorry that you are so situated [in Boston], for little honor or credit is to be got, but your all is at stake. If you succeed in bringing about a reconciliation the Cockpit plume themselves; if force to force is necessary it may ridiculously be called a massacre and tho' you have done your duty in both capacitys as civil & military commander, yet your name may be unjustly execrated. I most sincerely wish you a happy and glorious retreat from your sea of trouble. . . ." Abercrombie to Gage, Sept. 21, 1774, Gage MSS.

[9] Hutchinson (ed.), *Diary and Letters of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson*, I, 325.

[10] Barrington to Gage, Dec. 6, 1774 (Private), Gage MSS.

[11] Barrington to Gage, Dec. 31, 1774 (Private), *ibid.*

ures were now determined with respect to America. . . ." [12] On which day those measures were finally settled upon is not clear, but it is certain that the resulting instructions sent to General Gage were embodied in a "Secret" dispatch from Dartmouth dated January 27. Of course, there never had been any doubt that the king and his advisers would insist upon coercion. There had been questions, to be sure, regarding the form of coercion and the time of application, also concerning the advisability of coupling conciliatory gestures with the exertion of force. It was decided that Gage's troops must move, and quickly, to seize the Massachusetts leaders. Dartmouth and John Pownall had urged that a commissioner or commissioners be ordered to America to negotiate while Gage took the field. This proposal, however, had made no headway, especially since the idea of sending out a special emissary was suspected to be the brain child of Thomas Pownall, who obviously wanted to be that emissary. Thomas Pownall was an unpopular person in governmental circles. There was also some talk of a public assurance to the Americans that they would not be taxed, provided they accepted the supremacy of Parliament, but nothing much came of it.

The "Secret" dispatch did not begin its journey to America on the day it was written. It was held up until the cabinet was positively assured that it had the support of the House of Commons. That support was readily given. A Whig minority urged conciliation as the best policy toward America. However, Lord North's cabinet had a larger majority early in 1775 than it had enjoyed at any previous time upon American questions, for almost everyone in Britain believed that the dominance of Parliament must be maintained. On January 26 that body refused even to consider the papers sent to London by the First Continental Congress. Early in February an address to the throne declaring Massachusetts in a state of rebellion was approved by a heavy vote. A bill restricting the trade of New England to Great

[12] Hutchinson (ed.), *Diary and Letters of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson*, I, 362–63.

Britain and the British West Indies and barring the New Englanders from the Newfoundland fisheries obtained equally favorable consideration. Parliament also approved enlargement of the army in America and the sending of the three major generals to Gage's assistance. Lord North's famous Conciliatory Resolution was the only gesture made toward an amicable settlement by government. Although it conceded nothing to the colonists except that they might be permitted to contribute to the expenses of empire by acts of their own assemblies rather than by acts of Parliament, it was condemned as a sign of weakness by many friends of the ministry and was eventually passed on February 20 only because of strong pressure exerted by Lord North.

The "Secret" dispatch upon which so much depended was apparently also delayed until futile last minute negotiations of Dartmouth with Benjamin Franklin had definitely failed.[13] It was forwarded from London on February 22 or very soon thereafter, for Dartmouth enclosed documents from the cabinet describing events in the imperial capital up to February 22.[14] To assure safe arrival in America, the original dispatch, with the enclosures, was placed aboard H.M.S. *Falcon*, and a duplicate, with the enclosures and another letter from Dartmouth to Gage of February 22, was entrusted to Captain De Lancey, who was sailing to Boston on the H.M.S. *Nautilus* under Captain Collins to procure horses for his regiment. Dartmouth's instructions were still further delayed by unfavorable western winds, which may be said to have postponed the War of Independence for about three weeks. When William Knox read a copy of the fateful dispatch to Thomas Hutchinson on March 22, Hutchinson realized that the die was cast, and he made inquiries regarding

[13] The writer is indebted to Professor Verner W. Crane for the suggestion that the "Secret" letter was retained until these negotiations had collapsed. The history of Dartmouth's attempt through intermediaries to reach an agreement with Franklin will be included in Professor Crane's forthcoming book upon Franklin and the American Revolution.

[14] The dispatch may have been sent on board ship and the enclosures added later, but this does not seem likely.

the location of the two ships. He learned that on March 12 the *Falcon* was still at Torbay and the *Nautilus* at Plymouth. However, the *Nautilus* set sail on March 13 and arrived at Boston on April 14. Two days later Captain John Linzee brought the *Falcon* into the harbor.

Hutchinson was certainly not the only man in England who accurately weighed the contents of Dartmouth's letter. Before the end of March Dartmouth himself told Hutchinson that he feared the king's troops would be resisted and that a clash might be for the best. Later Dartmouth would try feebly to evade responsibility for the outbreak of the war and would imply that Gage had initiated the struggle. But his instructions are too clear to permit placing the burden of the conflict upon the general.

It is a surprising fact that many writers who have dealt with the War of Independence have asserted that Gage sent his men out to Concord upon his own initiative. It is even more surprising that only two of those writers have made any use of the "Secret" dispatch. Nor did either of these realize its fatal significance: that General Gage must use force against the Americans.

While it is true that Dartmouth's letter informs the general that "in a situation where every thing depends so much upon the events of the day, and upon local circumstances, your conduct must be governed very much by your own judgment and discretion," it is clear that he desired Gage to act, and to act promptly and decisively, unless the state of affairs in Massachusetts had greatly altered. He states that Gage's reports "show a determination in the people to commit themselves at all events in open rebellion" and that "in such a situation, force should be repelled by force." He informs the general that considerable reinforcements are on the way from Great Britain, and he tells him to encourage the formation of a corps of Tories. He hints that he is dissatisfied because Gage has remained inactive in Boston and that "It is hoped that this large reinforcement to your army will enable you to take a more active & determined

part." Dartmouth asserts roundly that "the authority of this kingdom must be supported, & the execution of its laws inforced." He states that since the people in three New England colonies seem "determined to cast off their dependence upon the government of this kingdom, the only consideration that remains is, in what manner the force under your command may be exerted to defend the constitution & to restore the vigour of government." He thinks that "a smaller force now, if put to the test, would be able to encounter them with greater probability of success than might be expected from a greater army, if the people would be suffered to form themselves upon a more regular plan, to acquire confidence from discipline, and to prepare those resources without which every thing must be put to the issue of a single action." Dartmouth also declares that the "king's servants" believe that "the first & essential step . . . toward reestablishing government, would be to arrest the principal actors and abettors in the Provincial Congress," if that body had reassembled (which, of course, it had) ". . . though such a proceeding should be, according to your own idea of it, a signal for hostilities yet . . . it will surely be better that the conflict should be brought on, upon such ground, than in a riper state of rebellion." Gage is instructed, if necessary, to use force to prevent the patriots from seizing ships bringing goods to American ports contrary to the nonimportation agreements, and he is scolded for permitting the patriots to drill in Faneuil Hall. Over and over again Dartmouth tells Gage to move decisively.

There can be no doubt that Gage immediately and properly concluded that Dartmouth's letter was an order to march. There had been no change in conditions in Massachusetts. He was forced to consider North's Conciliatory Resolution as window dressing which did not affect his confidential instructions, especially since Dartmouth's letter of February 22, also received on April 14, declared again that those instructions were to be executed. Within a few hours after receiving the duplicate copy Gage ordered about seven hundred light infantrymen and grena-

diers, the best men in his army, excused from routine duties. He was obviously making ready for an extraordinary measure, as patriot observers promptly noted.

But what extraordinary measure could Gage take? In many quarters it was believed at the time that he would try to capture the most prominent patriots in Massachusetts, in the hope that leaderless Americans in that colony would be cowed into obedience. Indeed, his instructions authorized him to do that very thing. Many historians have contended that he actually attempted to seize John Hancock and Samuel Adams. However, a warning from England that these gentlemen and their associates were in danger reached Marblehead as early as April 8. Another such warning was actually printed in a Philadelphia newspaper on April 10. At least partly because of advance information, there was in Boston only one outstanding patriot on April 14, Dr. Joseph Warren. Samuel Adams and Hancock were then at Concord and were about to remove to a farmhouse near Lexington. Probably Gage was not informed regarding their movements; at least his papers contain no reference to their location. John Adams, the ablest patriot of them all, was completely out of reach. Under the circumstances it was very doubtful that all or any considerable number of the American leaders could be apprehended. Besides, it was equally doubtful that their capture would prevent an uprising. Since Gage himself later denied, at least by implication, that he actually undertook to seize those leaders, since no effort was made even to take Warren, and since no direct evidence that the general issued orders to apprehend them has ever been found, it must be concluded that such was not his intention. It is an interesting fact that the British troops who marched through Lexington on April 19 passed within a short distance of Samuel Adams and Hancock, but did not turn off to hunt down those gentlemen. It is also interesting that the troops captured Paul Revere that day, but did not hold him. To be sure, Revere was small fry.

What Gage really decided to do as the result of his "Secret"

instructions was to send the detachment of troops which he had set aside to Concord to destroy the military stores gathered at that place by the patriots. On the very day the *Nautilus* arrived at Boston one of Gage's spies reported to him that Paul Revere had carried news of the general's preparation of boats to Concord on April 7, that the head men among the Americans there were frightened and at loggerheads, and that they were trying to hide most of their military equipment in and near the village. The spy gave the locations of the places of concealment chosen by the patriots and offered to furnish a guide for troops, should they be sent out to Concord from Boston. Here was a chance to strike the sudden and perhaps decisive blow that Dartmouth desired. Soldiers could probably reach Concord and destroy the equipment. The Americans might refrain from hostilities, either through fear of the consequences or through a desire to avoid the role of the aggressor. If an armed expedition peacefully accomplished its mission, the more timid Americans might be frightened into submission. On the other hand, should the patriots oppose the soldiers and begin an open revolt—unthinkable that they should—revolt would come in any case, and they would be burdened with the responsibility for opening hostilities. This measure had another advantage for Gage: it was well within his instructions. True, he had not been specifically commanded to order the troops to Concord. It should be remembered, however, that the British cabinet did not know about the supplies collected at Concord when it sent out the "Secret" dispatch. The measure was far less drastic than the specific instructions given by the cabinet. The spirit of the dispatch would also have warranted more violent action.[15]

It may be asked why the light infantry and the grenadiers did not move until April 19 when Gage's resolution to move was taken on April 14. Partly the delay may be explained by the fact that the Provincial Congress was to recess on the fifteenth. Cer-

[15] The present writer has told the story of the "Secret" dispatch and has discussed Gage's motives in sending out the troops in "Why the March to Concord?" *American Historical Review*, XLIX (1944), 446–54.

tainly, opposition to the soldiers was less likely to occur when the patriot assembly was disbanded. No doubt Gage waited for the original copy of the "Secret" dispatch, which, as has been mentioned above, reached Boston on the sixteenth. He would want to be sure that no error in copying, no slip on the part of a clerk in the colonial office, led him into a frightful mistake. He would likewise wish to be assured that documents inserted in the original copy did not change the tenor of his instructions. When he discovered no reason to alter his plan, he executed it.

From the beginning, the expedition to Concord was ill-starred. On the evening of the eighteenth it was known pretty well throughout Boston that British troops would set out that night. It has often been conjectured and sometimes maintained that there was a spy in the British camp who warned the Americans. Henry Clinton positively asserts that Gage was betrayed on this occasion and upon many other later ones.[16] There is in existence a credible story to the effect that one of the British soldiers sent on the expedition told his Boston wife about it and that she passed the information on to patriot leaders in the town. Many other possible ways in which Gage's plans leaked out have been suggested. It does seem likely, however, that observation of the movements of the troops in the town gave ample evidence of the intentions of their commander and that the patriots in Boston needed no secret informant to tell them what was about to happen. The only real problem faced by those patriots, it would appear, was not to secure knowledge of Gage's plans, but how to get that knowledge out of the town, since Gage took great pains to prevent American couriers from leaving Boston. They solved that problem, as every American knows. Their messengers were sufficiently successful in eluding British troops so that news of the march of the redcoats ran far ahead of them. The troops began to move about ten o'clock, landed quietly from the admiral's long-prepared boats at Lechmere's Point, and ad-

[16] Note by Clinton, n. d., Sir Henry Clinton MSS., William L. Clements Library.

vanced rapidly toward Lexington. As they advanced, led by guides who knew the country, they learned that their march was no secret, for church bells rang everywhere, shots were fired, and drums were beat to notify the whole countryside of their progress.

At Lexington occurred the fatal clash which all thoughtful men had feared would eventually come. Who fired the first shot can never be surely known. Americans on the scene afterward positively stated that the redcoats pulled the trigger first, indeed that Major Pitcairn, second in command of the British regulars, was directly responsible for the shooting. They declared that he ordered a detachment on the village green to fire after the militiamen gathered there had not quickly obeyed his command to disperse. There is no evidence to suggest that these men were not trying to tell the truth. On the other hand, British participants in the dramatic incident played out in the dawn of April 19, men whose veracity there is no particular reason to question, asserted on the contrary that the Americans fired first and that the British then retaliated. Their accounts make it appear possible that Americans who had taken positions near the green lost their self-control and initiated the shooting. Unless we wish to assert that the statements upon one side or the other were entirely false or inaccurate, we cannot positively say exactly how it all began. In any case, several Americans fell before the guns and bayonets of the soldiers and others were wounded. Nor were the British entirely without casualties, since some of the minutemen managed to fire a few shots in retaliation. The War of Independence had begun.

The British expedition, of course, continued on its way to Concord. Prudence might have dictated an immediate retreat to Boston, for the militia were obviously gathering from many miles around. However, Lieutenant Colonel Francis Smith, who was in command, could not know for certain that there would be further and more strenuous opposition beyond Lexington. Besides, he had his orders. At Concord the British found and de-

stroyed more or less effectively the military supplies collected there. Most of these the Americans had managed to carry off to safety. At Concord the British also found considerable forces of patriots, who opened upon them a galling fire which would never cease until the redcoats should finally make their way back to Boston. As the redcoats, having executed their orders, fell back toward Lexington, they were attacked from the flanks and the rear and suffered heavily from American musketry. Before they reached Lexington they were in a bad situation. Outside Lexington, however, they met Earl Percy with a whole brigade of troops and two field pieces. Gage had been informed of the plight of the expeditionary force and had almost stripped Boston of soldiers in order to send assistance. Percy placed Smith's exhausted men in the center of his brigade and then began to retreat toward Boston. The American militiamen attacked ever more fiercely, and even Percy was for a time in very serious trouble. Anticipating that Percy would retreat by way of Cambridge, Americans gathered there to cut him off. Either through good judgment or in consequence of a warning, Percy turned instead toward Charlestown. There his force finally found a measure of refuge under the guns of British men-of-war in the harbor. A detachment under Brigadier General Robert Pigot was also there under Gage's orders to support Percy. Percy's force was ferried across to Boston during the night of the nineteenth. Meanwhile, the patriots in Boston had not taken advantage of a splendid opportunity to attack Gage in the town. They had arms for such a venture, and the British forces in Boston and on Castle Island could not have been more than 1,300 men. His entrenchments and the warships may have deterred them. More likely, they did not recover from the shock of the news from the country in time to take action. It had been a sad day for the British army. British casualties seem to have been 73 killed, 174 wounded; American, 49 killed, 39 wounded.

It is interesting to speculate about what would have happened on April 19 had Gage had the services of cavalry. Cer-

tainly the mission upon which he sent the troops was one for horsemen rather than for foot soldiers. Of course, cavalry would have moved more rapidly. Moreover, it would not have been so easy to assail mounted men, who would have had greater opportunities for counterattack. Speculation aside, the situation was an extremely awkward one for Gage by nightfall, for thousands of men immediately moved from American towns, villages, and farms toward Boston. American campfires were soon burning on the hills of Roxbury, and Gage was closely besieged.[17]

There has been a vast amount of writing and much interesting discussion about the events of April 19, 1775. One question which has been posed again and again and which some writers have attempted to answer must be treated here, for it involves the loyalty of Margaret Gage to Britain and to her own husband. It has often been stated that Margaret Gage may have furnished information of the general's plans for April 19 to the American leaders. One recent and incautious writer even goes so far as to say that the "authorities" are agreed that she probably did so. On the other hand, Allen French, the well-known scholar who has labored with insight and diligence among the documents concerning the beginning of the Revolutionary War, expresses the opinion that the suspicions expressed regarding Mrs. Gage's conduct belong to romance rather than to history. Mr. French is undoubtedly right in his judgment.

The case against Mrs. Gage, never carefully drawn up by any one historian, contains some interesting facts and conjectures. It is pointed out that her father, Peter Kemble, was suspected during his lifetime of being a Tory, but that he was not molested by the patriots during the Revolutionary War, also that Mrs. Gage had other relatives, such as Philip Schuyler, who were enthusiastic defenders of the American cause. Emphasis is then laid upon a statement in William Gordon's history of the Amer-

[17] Of the many accounts of the beginning of the War of Independence this writer has relied particularly on two books by Allen French, *The Day of Concord and Lexington* . . . (Boston, 1925), and *General Gage's Informers.*

ican Revolution in which the patriots in Boston who watched Gage's movements are represented as receiving a warning regarding the expedition to Concord from "a daughter of liberty unequally yoked in point of politics." Certain lines in Charles Stedman's account of the same conflict are then brought to bear. According to Stedman, Gage told Earl Percy on the evening of April 18 about his plans and Percy immediately afterward was informed by Bostonians outside Gage's headquarters that they knew all about those plans. When Percy reported this fact to Gage, the general is supposed to have been tremendously surprised and to have remarked that he had previously spoken about his plans to only one person. Upon the basis of these circumstances it is argued that Peter Kemble may have been secretly devoted to the American cause; that Mrs. Gage may therefore have been the "daughter of liberty unequally yoked in point of politics" who supposedly gave the warning; and that she may well have been the one person whom Gage supposedly informed about the expedition.

Let us add two facts that may be adduced to support this trend of thought. There can be no question that Margaret Gage's heart was torn between conflicting loyalties because of the struggle between England and the Thirteen Colonies. In a conversation with a friend on the "day after that dreadful one"—the day after Bunker Hill—Mrs. Gage indicated that her own emotions were well described in the touching lines uttered by Blanche of Spain in Shakespeare's play *King John:*

> The Sun's o'ercast with blood; fair day, adieu!
> Which is the side that I must go withal?
> I am with both; each army hath a hand,
> And in their rage,—I having hold of both,—
> They whirl asunder, and dismember me.
> Husband, I cannot pray that thou mayst win,
> Uncle, I needs must pray that thou mayst lose.
> Father, I may not wish the fortune thine.
> Grandam, I will not wish thy wishes thrive.

Whoever wins, on that side shall I lose,
Assured loss, before the match is played.[18]

There is also the interesting fact that General Gage's lands in New York were not declared forfeit by the New York assembly, although those of Henry Clinton, also a commander in chief of the British army, were seized.

Do all these circumstances make a strong case against Margaret Gage? The answer must be a decided negative. In the first place, only the strongest evidence should lead us to suspect that the wife betrayed her husband. Nor is the evidence strong; it is actually trifling. We do not know that Peter Kemble was an American sympathizer. He probably was the Tory he was reputed to be. Moreover, "the daughter of liberty" was in all probability the wife of the British soldier, mentioned previously, who is said to have conveyed the information.[19] Besides, we cannot be at all sure that Gage told his wife about his plans. If he did tell only one person, we might well argue that that person was his wife's brother, Stephen Kemble, or Colonel Smith, or Major Pitcairn, or some person who would help guide the expedition, or any one of several other individuals. Nor can we draw any definite conclusion from the fact that Gage's lands in New York were not forfeited. After all, Gage was popular in New York; he did not do any fighting there during the War of Independence; his wife had relatives in positions of influence; and he was not American-born. Moreover, he carried through some legal maneuvers which may have warded off confiscation.[20] Any or all of these facts can explain why he was not deprived of his lands. Henry Clinton's situation was quite different. In summing up

[18] There is an extract of Mrs. Gage's letter in Colonial Office, 5/134. It is printed in Richard A. Roberts (ed.), *Calendar of Home Office Papers of the Reign of George III, 1773–1775 . . .* (London, 1899), 479. It is perhaps worth recording that the writer of the introduction to this volume did not recognize the lines either as good poetry or as the work of Shakespeare. Regarding Mrs. Gage's attitude see also Hutchinson (ed.), *Diary and Letters of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson*, I, 497–98.

[19] See Justin Winsor (ed.), *Memorial History of Boston*, 4 vols. (Boston, 1882–83), III, 68 n.

[20] See p. 293, note 10.

the matter, we should also note that no contemporary accused Mrs. Gage of betrayal, that no indication of an estrangement between the Gages because of the events of 1775 has been brought forward, and that the patriots needed no secret informer to tell them about the general's plans. Without further information, we must conclude that the accusation against Margaret Gage falls to the ground—that she was in all likelihood innocent of the charge.

CHAPTER XV

Bunker Hill

THE NEWS of Lexington and Concord, though an outbreak of hostilities had long been anticipated in many quarters, nevertheless came as a rude shock to the colonies, for imagination before the battle could hardly realize the brutal facts of shooting, bayoneting, wounds, and death. Thousands of New Englanders enthusiastically and immediately took the field, and many other Americans prepared to follow. However, numerous others, some timid, some cautious, and some thoughtful, hoped for a reconciliation. Timothy Pickering, according to his own later statement, argued against the formation of an American army on April 20 on the ground that a compromise could be reached. Even Dr. Joseph Warren, who had not been the least aggressive of the patriot leaders in Massachusetts, seems to have had qualms immediately after the battle regarding his own conduct. He wrote to Gage on the same day:

I have many things which I wish to say to your Excellency, and most sincerely wish I had broken through the formalities which I thought due to your rank, and freely have told you all I knew or thought of public affairs, and I must ever confess, whatever may be the event, that you generously gave me such opening, as I now think I ought to have embraced; but the true cause of my doing it was the knowledge I had of the vileness and treachery of many persons around you, who, I supposed, had gained your entire confidence.[1]

[1] Frothingham, *Life and Times of Joseph Warren*, 467.

In other words Warren had no intention of laying down his arms, but rather regretted that both he and Gage had not acted in such a way that it would not have been necessary for him to take up those arms.

The assembly of Connecticut went much further than Warren. It sent two of its members to Gage with a letter from Governor Jonathan Trumbull of that colony suggesting a truce and a conference to discuss the situation. Gage replied that he would welcome a reconciliation on the basis of the acceptance by his opponents of the proposals made by government. He was suggesting, of course, Lord North's Conciliatory Resolution as an avenue to an accommodation. However, Gage did not offer to attend a conference. Moreover, the Connecticut troops about Boston condemned the action of their officials, and the Massachusetts patriots were highly indignant. Consequently, Trumbull soon let it be known that Connecticut would stand shoulder to shoulder with Massachusetts and her other sister colonies. An attempt toward reconciliation by John Cruger and thirteen other New Yorkers met a somewhat similar fate. These men, some of whom knew Gage personally, expressed their conviction that he detested the thought of an Anglo-American war, and suggested that a meeting be held at New York to arrange for an armistice, which should endure until the British government had had an opportunity to reconsider its policy in the light of the events of April 19.[2] Gage's response, could only be that the patriots could have an accommodation by simply putting aside their arms. Gage apparently continued to hope until June that hostilities somehow or other would cease. He seems to have entertained the idea that the Second Continental Congress might adopt some conciliatory measure. And, of course, there was always the chance, slender though it was, that his superiors in London would alter their policy. Only when he laid down his plans for the attack upon the Yankee fortifications on Breed's Hill did he finally abandon that hope. On June 12 he took the decisive

[2] John Cruger *et al.* to Gage, May 5, 1775, Gage MSS.

step of proclaiming martial law.[3] That he never had any substantial belief in the possibility of reconciliation after April 19 is indicated by the fact that he had decided by May 13 to send Mrs. Gage back to England,[4] but she did not actually leave Boston until August, when she accompanied a shipload of sick and wounded to England in Captain Robertson's *Charming Nancy.*

Slim though the chances for successful negotiations were after Lexington and Concord, it is likely that Gage's conduct in Boston between April 19 and June 12 was more cautious than might have been expected because of the possibility that war might still be avoided. It is true, of course, that the forces at his command were only slowly increased and that his situation for many weeks was such that unsuccessful offensive action might easily be disastrous. In any case, he deliberately pursued a policy of watchful defense and careful preparation for the greater trials which apparently lay ahead. Percy and his men had hardly reached Charlestown when Admiral Graves, who seldom took a bold course himself, strongly recommended to Gage that war be waged immediately and relentlessly against the forces outside Boston. Graves urged the general to hold Bunker Hill, to burn down Charlestown and Roxbury, and to fortify strongly both Bunker Hill and the hills in Roxbury. From Roxbury the approaches to Dorchester Heights could be commanded by cannon fire. By this plan Bunker Hill, Breed's Hill, and Dorchester, the three spots from which it was possible to bombard Boston and shipping in the bay, would be controlled, and Boston itself would be made almost impregnable. Graves offered to place all his marines at Gage's disposal and to send seamen to protect Castle William to permit the general the fullest possible use of the land forces available. Gage, however, vetoed this project. He probably felt that the Americans gathered on the mainland were stronger than Graves realized and that an attack upon the Roxbury hills with the meager strength at his com-

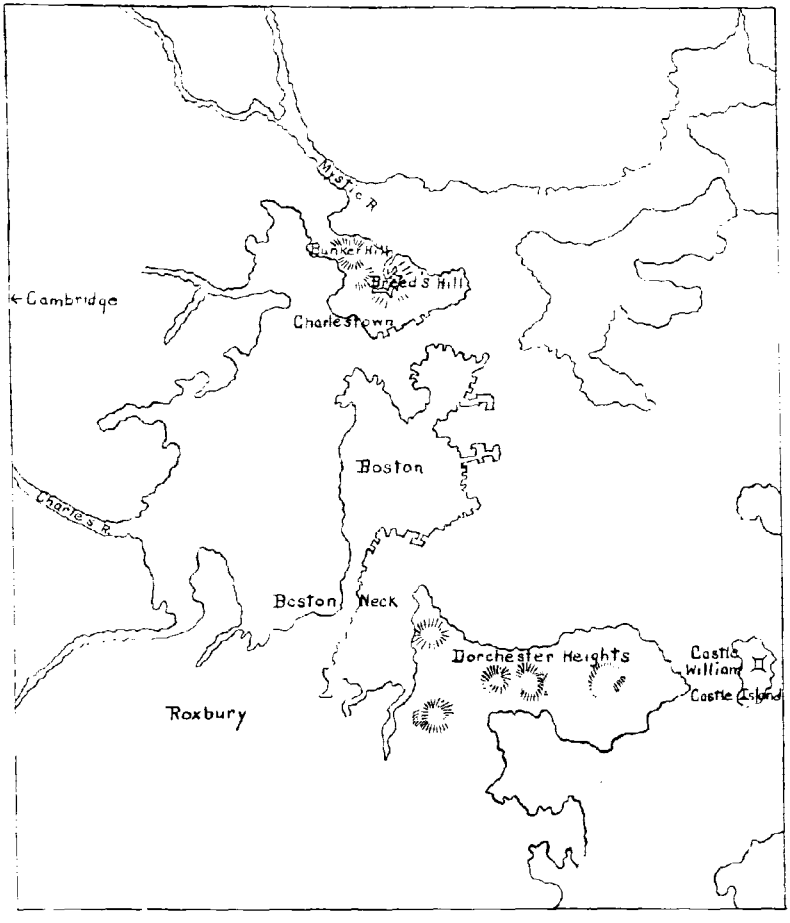
[3] *Gage Corr.*, I, 404–405.

[4] Hutchinson (ed.), *Diary and Letters of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson*, I, 476.

mand was a very risky venture, especially since there were thousands of citizens in Boston with arms who might rise at a critical moment. No doubt the idea of burning Charlestown and Roxbury unnecessarily was also unpleasant to him. His friend James Wolfe might have adopted such a plan, might have executed it successfully, and might thus have ensured British mastery of Boston. Nevertheless, one can argue cogently that Gage's decision was the correct one. Gage undertook at this time to withdraw all his men from Bunker Hill into Boston. In taking that step, which seems to have been unwise, he made future trouble for himself.[5]

Whether or not there was to be a war, prudence demanded that Gage concentrate the army in America insofar as possible in as safe a place as he could find, until reinforcements should cross the Atlantic in large numbers. He would undoubtedly have preferred to gather his forces at New York, the strategic center of the colonies and a stronghold of the supporters of Parliament. However, he had neither sufficient strength nor enough shipping to undertake such a measure. Moreover, such a step, entailing a complete withdrawal from Boston, must have seemed in the early days of the War of Independence disadvantageous in terms of prestige. A concentration at Halifax, another possibility, would cause not only a loss of prestige but also the temporary virtual disappearance of British military power from the rebellious Thirteen Colonies. Under the circumstances, Gage chose to stay in Boston, despite the awkwardness of his position there, and to use that town as a temporary base for operations. He therefore ordered the officers in charge of the small detachments still remaining at New York and Marshfield to bring their men to Boston. Both of these officers, with the aid of the navy, managed to execute their instructions. He also brought in small reinforcements from Canada.

[5] For a scholarly discussion of Graves's plan and Gage's reaction to it, see Allen French, *The First Year of the American Revolution* (Boston and New York, 1934), 19–21. This volume is filled with valuable details regarding the siege of Boston. The present writer has made free use of it.



BOSTON AND ENVIRONS, 1775

Prepared and drawn by Pearl Wells Alden.

In order to strengthen the position of the army in Boston, Gage also improved the fortifications he had thrown up and deprived the patriots within the town of power to assist their fellows outside it. The defenses he had had erected across Boston Neck were made more formidable and others were added in such a fashion that a successful infantry attack upon his lines became almost an impossibility, especially since Graves's ships could be expected to offer major assistance. Although Gage lacked sufficient engineers, it was not too difficult, with toil and sweat, to complete the job of fortifying. However, the task of rendering unfriendly Boston townsmen harmless was something else again. When Dr. Joseph Warren wrote to Gage on April 20 suggesting that the inhabitants be allowed freely to leave the town, Gage refused to reply on the ground that neither Warren nor any patriot organization outside Boston had legal authority. He undertook instead to negotiate with the selectmen of the town. Gage demanded a promise from them that the citizens would remain quiet in the event of an attack by the American forces. The selectmen, dealing with Gage only after consultation with provincial leaders, gave the promise, but asked that all persons who desired to do so should be allowed to depart for the country with their effects. In return for this concession Tories would be permitted to enter Boston from the country with their property, and those already in Boston were to be privileged to send out for their effects. Gage agreed to this exchange, provided that the townsmen first gave up their arms. His stipulation was accepted, and on April 28 almost 1,800 muskets, with many pistols and bayonets, were turned over to the British by the selectmen. The Boston people were thus deprived of the power to assist their brethren.

Nevertheless, Gage's transactions with the selectmen involved him in a morass of accusations and counteraccusations. The exchange of persons and property began on April 30, but troubles arose almost immediately. Gage brought upon himself charges of bad faith when he insisted that merchandise was not included

in the agreement. Later he seems to have been slow to give even permits of departure to the townsmen. There is some reason to believe that he failed to live up to his pledge because of the persuasion of Tories who desired to punish the patriots and because of the value of the Bostonians as hostages. The Tories claimed that the patriots would set fire to Boston as soon as their friends had crossed the British lines.[6] On the other hand, it is not certain that Americans outside the town did not interfere with the efforts of the Tories to regain their property. In any case, Gage laid himself open to an accusation of unfair dealing, the only such charge placed against him during his long stay in America. It would appear that it was not without basis. To be sure, the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, once more in session, sequestered the estates of Tories as early as May 22. It can hardly be claimed that it so acted merely in retaliation. To tell the truth, Gage could not have convinced his opponents of his good faith, no matter how he behaved. Passion had risen too high. The Reverend Thomas Allen expressed an astonishing suspicion in a letter to Seth Pomeroy on May 4. "I have been concerned lest General Gage should spread the small-pox in your army. . . ." Seth Pomeroy, who had known Gage in the French and Indian War and who should have been above such nonsense, swallowed it hook, line, and sinker. He wrote: "If it is in General Gage's power I expect he will send ye small pox into ye army—but I hope in ye infinight mercy of God he will prevent it. . . ."[7]

In addition to establishing a base for operations Gage could take three further measures to bolster British military power in America: enlist Tory regiments, make use of the Indians, and raise Negro troops. So far as the Tories were concerned, Gage desired to avail himself of their services in Massachusetts, but was unable to do so. A number of Massachusetts Tories indi-

[6] On Gage's attitude see *Gage Corr.*, I, 397–98.

[7] Louis E. de Forest (ed.), *The Journals and Papers of Seth Pomeroy . . .* (Society of Colonial Wars in the State of New York, New Haven, 1926), 165, 167.

cated that they were willing to take up arms as early as April. Nevertheless, when Timothy Ruggles attempted to organize a corps to act under Gage, he did not succeed.[8] Gage also encouraged Lord Dunmore, governor of Virginia, who was trying to raise a body of Loyalists and who was even threatening to enlist Negroes. Gage actually ordered a small force of regulars stationed in East Florida and the Bahamas to join Dunmore.[9] In addition, the general approved of the efforts of Guy Johnson and Sir John Johnson, the nephew and the son of Sir William, to collect and arm Tories in the Mohawk Valley. He likewise gave what assistance he could to Colonel Joseph Gorham, who tried to enroll Loyalist rangers in Nova Scotia.[10]

It was logical that Gage should consider seriously using the Indians, especially after the surprise and capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point by the patriots, because of which Canada, almost denuded of regulars, lay open to invasion. The red men, except for a few small tribes that had become semidomesticated, were the enemies of the American frontiersmen, who had seized their lands, slain their game, and cheated them in trade. On the other hand, Sir William Johnson, John Stuart, Gage himself, and many other British officials had sought to protect the rights of the Indians and had made many generous presents to them. If the savages took part in hostilities between "King George" and the Americans, most of them were certain to side with "King George." The Indians, of course, could render useful service to the British in operations against the frontiers of the colonies, particularly on the Lake Champlain route. Indeed, they could force the Americans to fight on two fronts. Indian warfare would, however, certainly result in an endless chain of brutal-

[8] *Gage Corr.*, I, 401; French, *First Year of the American Revolution*, Appendix 12, 729–30.

[9] Gage to Dunmore, May 15, 1775, Gage to Major Jonathan Furlong, May 15, 1775, Gage MSS.; *Gage Corr.*, I, 399.

[10] Gage had no part in the formation of a scheme which brought Lieutenant Colonel Allan McLean to America in an attempt to enlist a body of Highlanders, of whom there were many in the colonies. Of course, he gave his blessing to McLean. *Gage Corr.*, I, 401.

ities in the backwoods, even though every effort should be made to prevent the red men from perpetrating their traditional atrocities. British officers would in the long run be unable to protect women and children against their own allies, nor would they be able to avert the tortures and the scalpings characteristic of all wars waged by the Indians. Gage knew perfectly well that sending the Indians on the warpath would bring on innumerable barbarities. If we assume that the occurrences of April 19 did not turn a kindhearted man into a brute—and we must so assume —then Gage certainly hesitated to let loose the red men. Eventually, nevertheless, he did arrange for enlisting their services. No doubt he justified himself in part in his own mind by arguments to the effect that the Indians would be active only upon the frontiers and that American backwoodsmen who had mistreated them deserved no consideration from him.

It has been observed that Gage frequently advised British officials after the fall of 1774 to make sure that the friendship of the Indians toward Britain was not undermined by American agents. It is significant that as early as April 21 he wrote to Carleton suggesting that a body of Canadians and Indians operating against the frontiers of Massachusetts "under the command of a judicious person" would be useful when Britain was engaged in a struggle with the colonists. However, Gage apparently did not make a definite decision to employ Indians until June. Meanwhile, the Massachusetts Provincial Congress had sent the Reverend Samuel Kirkland to try to persuade the Iroquois either to support the Americans or to remain neutral and had actually enlisted members of the Stockbridge tribe in the American forces. After May 1 some of the Stockbridge men, regularly enrolled as soldiers, took part in the siege of Boston. It can be argued that the use of the Stockbridge Indians was not equivalent to the use of Iroquois, since they were semicivilized and since they were under the immediate command of white officers. On the other hand, even semicivilized Indians were likely to fight in the fashion of their fathers, and white offi-

cers leading Indians could not prevent them from committing atrocities. In any case, the employment of members of the Stockbridge tribe at Boston, where they could do the British no real harm, gave Gage an excuse to rally the numerous and more powerful Indian nations in the St. Lawrence Valley to the British cause.

In June, in letters to Dartmouth and Barrington discussing plans for future operations, Gage recommended that Indians be used to defend Canada, then seriously endangered by the American capture of Crown Point and Ticonderoga and by American incursions toward Montreal. At the same time he sent a similar recommendation to Carleton, who was unable, however, for many months to secure much help from the savages. Gage was not yet ready to call the interior Indians generally into action. In September he authorized John Connolly, a protégé of Dunmore, to raise Indians in the Ohio Valley to move against the hinterland of Virginia. Even then he was not counseling Stuart to persuade his charges to take the field. Rather, he merely advised Stuart to maintain British influence among the southern tribes so that they would be ready to act in case of need.[11]

It is interesting that Gage was also seriously contemplating the idea of enlisting forces of Negroes. In a "private" letter to Barrington of June 12 he wrote: "Things are now come to that crisis, that we must avail ourselves of every resource, even to raise the Negros, in our cause."[12] However, he took no action toward implementing the idea. It is true that he had already sent aid to Dunmore when the governor of Virginia was threatening to secure the aid of Negroes. There is no evidence that he suggested the measure to Dunmore. Nor can we accept a letter Gage wrote to Stuart early in 1775 as indicating that the general

[11] The use of Indians in the early months of the War of Independence has recently been discussed in greater detail in French, *First Year of the American Revolution*, 403–10. Mr. French has cited many documents. It is unnecessary to repeat his references. The writer's interpretation of Gage's statements and actions regarding the employment of Indians is somewhat more favorable to the general than that of Mr. French.

[12] *Gage Corr.*, II, 684

favored the employment of Negroes, although Gage was then passing on a warning to the South Carolinians that an Anglo-American war might result in their rice being brought to market by Negroes instead of whites. That letter was clearly only a threat made in an effort to keep the South Carolinians quiet.[13]

Between April 19 and June 12, while Gage was making his preparations for future operations, reinforcements in considerable strength arrived at Boston. Marines, dragoons, artillerymen, and infantry, mostly from Great Britain, continued to come in until the total number of men under his immediate command must have reached six thousand. In the meantime Gage did not even attempt a sortie, although skirmishes did take place on islands near Boston. These skirmishes were unimportant. They resulted from efforts on the part of Gage and Graves to procure hay and to protect their supply of meat. As yet Gage and the admiral were not in difficulties regarding provisions in general, but fodder did present something of a problem. In spite of the fact that these minor affrays caused great excitement on the mainland, there were very few casualties on either side.

With a large batch of reinforcements which reached the New England coast on May 25 came the long-expected major generals who were sent over to collaborate with Gage. They were possibly as good men as the British cabinet could secure at the moment, but they were not men conspicuous for ability. Two of them, William Howe and Henry Clinton, later served as commander in chief, and neither, situations taken into account, displayed any special aptitude for the supreme command. Howe, the senior major general, was the younger brother of the Viscount Howe who fell at Ticonderoga, a descendant of Prince Rupert, and a Whig in politics. He had opposed the policy of the cabinet in regard to America, but had been persuaded to take a part in executing that policy. Of the British bulldog type, he was brave, and popular with the rank and file. However, he was sluggish and his heart was probably never in his job. Clin-

[13] See Alden, *John Stuart and the Southern Colonial Frontier*, 171.

ton, although he was a serious student of warfare and was determined to make a name for himself, was a colorless and unimpressive person. All in all, he was very likely the fittest of the three to assume great responsibilities. John Burgoyne, the junior officer, was a pompous, cocksure, flamboyant, and impetuous man, with greater gifts for writing plays than for leading armies. If the Saratoga disaster cannot be laid at his door, at least it cannot be argued that he displayed any remarkable talent for command in his disastrous advance from Canada. All three major generals had risen to high rank in considerable part because of family influence. They came to Boston as conquering heroes, government even presenting to each of them £500 for "equipage money," that is, money to hire or buy coaches. Gage, knowing full well that these men had been sent to supply the energy which the cabinet believed he lacked, could not have felt unadulterated joy because of their coming. To his later sorrow, he would lean pretty heavily upon Howe for military advice and upon Burgoyne for literary assistance. It is significant, however, that after paying the coach money promised to his assistants he applied for the same gratuity for himself. During all the twelve years he had held the post of commander in chief the cabinet had not worried about *his* transportation.[14]

In the *Cerberus,* which brought the major generals to Boston, came also new instructions for Gage from Dartmouth. Earlier in May, Gage, along with the other British governors, had received orders to do what he could toward reconciliation on the basis of Lord North's Conciliatory Resolution.[15] Of course, Gage could do nothing in that matter in Massachusetts, nor could his colleagues use the measure effectively. It had come too late, and it was also too little. The directions carried by the *Cerberus* were of an utterly different nature. These, written almost at the moment Gage decided to send out the expedition to Concord, were composed after the cabinet had received letters from the general describing the attempts of the patriots to gather arms and

[14] *Gage Corr.,* II, 691. [15] *Ibid.,* 187–89.

to organize in military fashion. They called for the return of Haldimand to England, on the ground that he must not under any circumstances succeed to the supreme command, since it would not do for a Swiss to lead British forces against the Americans. They settled finally and peremptorily the claims of the governors to military authority. Henceforth, orders issued to the troops by all officers of the rank of brigadier general or higher were to be obeyed without question. What was much more important, Gage was definitely ordered to destroy any and all arsenals established by the patriots [16] and to take whatever other offensive steps he should judge necessary. He was again instructed to seize the patriot leaders, but was also specifically authorized to use his pardoning power. Dartmouth suggested that he issue a proclamation offering pardon to all malcontents, excepting possibly the most inveterate enemies to British authority. Dartmouth hoped that such a proclamation, coupled with the persuasive efforts of the king's supporters and the moderates, might weaken the patriot cause. However, he placed his faith in force and made it clear that Gage was not to scruple about using it. "It is however to the exertion of the fleet & army, in support of the vigorous measures which have been adopted by His Majesty and the two houses of Parliament that we are to trust for putting an end to the present troubles and disorders, and it is imagined that by the time this letter reaches you, the army under your command will be equal to any operation that may become necessary." In addition, the colonial secretary indicated that the cabinet had ordered four regiments from those called up for service in America to New York. Both Howe and Burgoyne had asked for the command of this force. Gage could have the doubtful pleasure of giving it to either of those gentlemen; or, if he thought it wise, he could reroute the regiments to Boston. Finally, Gage was to send home promptly recommendations for the future conduct of affairs in America.[17]

[16] A further proof that Dartmouth's letter of January 27 was an order to march.

[17] *Gage Corr.*, II, 190–96. Dartmouth also sent out two sets of "cypher." It is a strange fact that Gage had not previously had the use of a secret code.

In consequence of these instructions Gage immediately requested Admiral Graves to intercept the transports carrying the four regiments to New York and to have them change their course toward Boston. While Gage would have desired to have all his men in New York, the four regiments could hardly maintain themselves in that town. Their services might have been entirely lost. Besides, they were needed in Boston. Eventually the transports did reach Boston, but not in time for early action. The wisdom of his decision is obvious.

On June 12 Gage wrote to Dartmouth to convey his recommendations for the future conduct of the war. Once again he urged that large forces be employed in America. To carry on the war effectively he asked that 32,000 men be put in the field: 15,000, including "good irregulars, such as hunters, Canadians, Indians, &ca," operating in New England; 10,000, all regulars, based on New York; and 7,000 regulars "with a large corps of Canadians and Indians," based on Lake Champlain. He also urged that the naval forces on the North American station be augmented and that landing craft be supplied in large numbers. It can hardly be denied that his calculations regarding the forces needed display good military judgment, as did his earlier recommendations. In a "private" letter to Barrington of the same date, Gage, as usual, was more emphatic. He mentioned the fact that he had been bitterly criticized both in America and in London for not taking the field at the end of the summer of 1774. He told Barrington bluntly that if he had done so, he would have been crushed. He insisted that the task of dealing with the Americans had now become a tremendous one and that very powerful forces would be needed. The government must not again make the mistake of exerting insufficient power. It should hire Hanoverians, Hessians, and perhaps Russians; Indians should be employed, and perhaps even Negroes.[18]

On the same date Gage published the proclamation suggested by Dartmouth. In this document he proclaimed martial law and offered pardon to all Americans who would lay down their arms,

[18] *Ibid.*, I, 404, II, 684.

except for Samuel Adams and John Hancock. Unfortunately for Gage, he was too modest about his own literary powers on this occasion. Although he had previously exhibited considerable skill in drawing up public papers, he permitted Burgoyne, the man of letters, to compose the proclamation. The result was a pompous, high-flown, inaccurate, and silly production that made Burgoyne a laughing stock and reflected also upon Gage. The proclamation certainly did not persuade Americans to lay down their arms, nor did it even inspirit the friends of Britain. Instead it brought new criticism of Gage by those who did not recognize the true author. Gage had already been described as an "Alva" by John Adams, as a "Turkish bashaw" by Washington, and as a "butcher," but these were mild terms compared to those which Burgoyne provoked from the Reverend John Cleaveland of Ipswich. Cleaveland printed an open letter to Gage in the *Essex Gazette* for July 13, 1775: [19] "Thou profane, wicked monster of falsehood and perfidy . . . your late infamous proclamation is as full of notorious lies, as a toad or rattlesnake of deadly poison—you are an abandoned wretch. . . . Without speedy repentance, you will have an aggravated damnation in hell. . . . You are not only a robber, a murderer, and usurper, but a wicked rebel: a rebel against the authority of truth, law, equity, the English constitution of government, these colony states, and humanity itself." Cleaveland was evidently in an angry mood when he wrote. His attitude was substantially the same as that of certain citizens of Stratford, Connecticut, who, in the spring of 1776, threatened to mob a fellow citizen guilty of naming his newborn son after Thomas Gage.

June 12 was eventful in many ways for Gage, for he undertook in his letters of that day to inform Dartmouth and Barrington that he had made up his mind to take the offensive despite the fact that a large portion of the reinforcements sent out had not yet arrived.[20] It may be conjectured that he made

[19] Written on June 17.

[20] *Gage Corr.*, I, 405, II, 684–85.

his decision to act so soon in part because of the instructions he had recently received, which seemed to require greater activity than he had previously displayed. His decision is also to be explained in part by the awkward situation of his army in the town. Clearly Gage did not seriously entertain the idea of an all-out assault upon the patriot forces. These, about 15,000 men organized in two divisions of approximately equal size based on Roxbury and Cambridge, were truly formidable, although they were not strongly entrenched. Gage's 6,000 men, minus those needed to hold Boston and Castle William, were hardly sufficient to assail either of these divisions.[21] As these letters indicate, Gage did not believe he would be strong enough, even with the help of all the reinforcements sent from Britain, to crush the patriots and to march inland. Indeed, a victory over the besieging forces could bring no decisive advantages, unless followed up by occupation of New England, which would be impossible to achieve. What he contemplated was action to attain limited objectives, namely the occupation of Dorchester Peninsula with its lofty heights and of the Charlestown Peninsula, including, of course, Bunker Hill and Breed's Hill. If the Americans should obtain cannon, it seemed fairly likely that they would be able to bombard Boston itself from Dorchester Heights. Certainly, American artillery could reach Boston from Bunker Hill and Breed's Hill. In fact, effective American use of the hills on Charlestown Peninsula would make it impossible for the British to stay in the town. The artillery in Boston and the guns of the fleet could hardly reach the summits of those hills. Actually, Boston could be as effectively bombarded from Dorchester Heights as from Bunker Hill, but this fact was not known either to the Americans or to the British until later. The Americans had as yet done nothing toward occupying the Charlestown Peninsula and they had placed only a few troops upon the Dorchester Peninsula. Gage now believed that he had

[21] On the size of Gage's army at this time see French, *First Year of the American Revolution,* 737–39. The figure given in the text is somewhat lower than Mr. French's calculation.

sufficient forces to seize these "necks." When the rest of his reinforcements arrived, some 1,500 men, he might be able to carry out further operations. This plan also had the advantage of giving the idle and dispirited troops something to do. It had the hearty approval of the three major generals, who were eager for action.

By June 12 or immediately thereafter Gage, Howe, Clinton, and Burgoyne had agreed to move against Dorchester on June 18 and then quickly against the Charlestown Peninsula. Unfortunately for the British, however, the major generals could not keep this vital information to themselves. Burgoyne in particular seems to have talked freely. Consequently, it was known everywhere in Boston before the fourteenth that the British would take the offensive in a few days, and the news promptly reached American generals and officials outside the city. American leaders had long been concerned with the importance of Bunker Hill. Now they sprang to action. On June 16 the Massachusetts Committee of Safety, the executive body acting for the Provincial Congress, urged the American generals to take possession of that place and also to consider the advisability of fortifying Dorchester. The generals promptly decided to seize and fortify Bunker Hill, but neglected to do anything about Dorchester. On the evening of the sixteenth a contingent of militia supplied with entrenchment tools crossed the narrow neck of the Charlestown Peninsula and climbed Bunker Hill. On arriving there, however, the militia were ordered to proceed further, to Breed's Hill, a lower eminence in a more exposed position, where they began to throw up defenses. This change in plans, which was apparently instigated by Israel Putnam, was a bad mistake. Properly fortified, Bunker Hill would have been almost impregnable so long as the mainland behind it was in American hands. Breed's Hill, on the other hand, because it was lower, was more open to direct attack. Moreover, it could conceivably be flanked by British troops landed from the Mystic River in its rear. Luckily, perhaps, for

the American cause, the British failed to attempt such a flanking attack.

On the night of the sixteenth British sentinels in Boston heard noises from Breed's Hill indicating that the Americans were busy entrenching there. Clinton, learning of their activity, informed Gage and urged that they be attacked at daybreak before their preparations could be completed. He suggested that Howe lead a frontal attack from the point of the peninsula while he himself landed behind the Americans from the Mystic River with five hundred men to cut off their retreat. Clinton's plan had obvious merits. It was clear that the flanking force would itself be exposed to attack by detachments from the American camp at Roxbury. On the other hand, certain floating batteries and the small war vessel *Symmetry* stationed in the Charles River could assist Clinton with cannon fire across the neck between the Charlestown Peninsula and the mainland. But Gage and Clinton's colleagues vetoed the plan. They did not believe that Clinton's flanking movement was necessary, particularly since the Americans on Breed's Hill did not appear to be in great force. Nor did any of the British leaders, including Graves, strongly recommend using the guns of the fleet against the American communication lines from the Mystic. The *Symmetry,* a vessel of light draft, and the floating batteries then lying in the Charles River might have been employed for this purpose. True, they could be used with less effectiveness from the Charles, and actually were so utilized during the early stages of the battle that followed. Then they were ordered around to the Mystic, but too late to be of use. Howe urged a frontal assault, combined with an attempt to turn the American left wing along the shore of the Mystic. Howe's proposal was approved by Gage and even by Clinton himself, although Clinton thereby lost an opportunity to distinguish himself. It was agreed that Howe would lead the troops, Percy would be in command at Boston Neck, and Gage would stay at headquarters so as to be available in the event of an attack upon Percy and to deal

with unexpected emergencies. Howe's plan was not a bad one if carried out expeditiously *before* the Americans were firmly established. However, the generals had consumed much time in reaching their decision. Moreover, although he said that he recognized the need for haste, Howe made his preparations deliberately. It was not until the afternoon of the seventeenth that his men, burdened with equipment and food, were landed in two contingents at the end of the Charlestown Peninsula.

Meanwhile, the patriots, although very poorly organized, had built a small redoubt near the crest of Breed's Hill and had extended their line of defense all the way down to the Mystic. They had also placed a small force in Charlestown on their right flank and had brought up a few light cannon. Moreover, although there were a number of desertions from the line, reinforcements continued to appear from Roxbury. Eventually, something like 2,200 men fought against the British on Charlestown Peninsula. Against these raw militiamen Howe led about 1,550 infantrymen, most of them grenadiers and light infantry, than whom better troops could hardly have been found. By European standards a British victory was foreordained. However, the militiamen were solidly entrenched in the major part of their line, they were skilled in the use of their muskets, and those in the redoubt were led by the valiant Colonel William Prescott, a tower of strength to any army.

After some delay Howe organized his force into two wings, each of which began a slow advance in three lines. Howe himself led the right wing, while Brigadier General Pigot directed the left wing. When the patriot forces in Charlestown opened fire upon Pigot's men, Graves and Gage bombarded the town with hot shot and set it afire, thus protecting Pigot's flank. But a column which Howe sent forward to turn the patriot left encountered dismal failure, the musketry of Americans stationed on the shore of the Mystic creating havoc among the troops to whom Howe had entrusted this task. Almost simultaneously Howe and Pigot began their famous frontal assault. After suffer-

ing terrible losses, with Howe's men carrying the main burden of the attack, they were bloodily repulsed by short-range musketry fire. A second frontal assault met the same fate. The American fire was almost more than flesh could bear. However, Howe was desperate and dauntless. He closed his ranks, secured a reinforcement of between six hundred and seven hundred men from Boston, and rearranged some artillery which had previously served no useful purpose. The artillery swept away part of the American breastworks, and a final charge, which almost failed, carried the American redoubt. Even then most of the patriots, short of powder, retreated in fairly decent order, their rear guard doing its full duty. Disorganized militia on Bunker Hill, who had hovered in the rear all during the action, retreated with the brave defenders of Breed's Hill. The British, indeed, were too spent to exploit their victory. They took possession of Bunker Hill without a real fight and then halted. It is strange that the battle for Charlestown Peninsula should even now bear the name of that hill.

It was almost a Pyrrhic victory, although it did strengthen Gage's position in Boston. British losses, in view of the number of men involved, were truly appalling. The casualties among Howe's men, his reinforcements included, were over 40 per cent. Gage reported 226 killed and 828 wounded, a total of 1,054, which is no doubt quite accurate. Many of the wounded, of course, died later. The casualties among the British officers were particularly heavy. Of them the most notable were Gage's friend James Abercrombie, who had reached Boston in time to command the grenadiers under Howe, and Major Pitcairn, who were mortally wounded. Nor were American losses, though much lighter, negligible. The slain numbered at least 115, the wounded at least 271, and the captured at least 30, a total of 416. It is likely that American casualties were actually in the neighborhood of 440. Among the slain was Dr. Joseph Warren, who had served as a volunteer in the redoubt.

It is an interesting fact that Gage refrained from writing home

about the Battle of Bunker Hill until June 25. It is altogether likely that he delayed his report in the hope that he would be able to include in it the news that he had captured Dorchester Heights at small cost. Clinton was urging an attack on Dorchester as early as June 18. Five days later arrangements were completed for the attack. Because of the lack of manpower and because of an opinion that possession of the heights was not necessary for the defense of Boston, Gage finally dropped the project on the score of unnecessary risk. According to one account the attacking force was actually placed in boats before his decision was taken.[22]

On June 25 Gage had to face the sad task of informing his superiors of his dubious achievement. He told his story soberly and briefly in an official letter to Dartmouth, understandably exaggerating the size of the American forces and their losses and giving all praise to the gallantry of his officers and men. In a "private" letter to the minister he made it clear that the attack on Breed's Hill was necessary, but expressed his regret that the cost was so dear. He again declared that it would not be enough to assail the Americans merely in New England and again emphasized the need of large forces to conquer the colonies.[23] Forwarding to Barrington on the same day the official list of casualties, Gage also indited a "private" letter to him. Again he made no attempt to hide his heavy losses or to overstress the value of his achievement. He told the simple truth. A less honorable man might have done otherwise. However, he expressed the bitterness which his cruel situation at Boston had brought to him. Emphasizing the geographical disadvantages under which he had labored, he declared he wished "this cursed place was burned." He again told Barrington that Britain should either send mighty forces to America or confine her efforts to a block-

[22] Regarding this project see The Kemble Papers. *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1883*, 44; French, *First Year of the American Revolution*, 260. The second volume cited contains (pp. 208–58) the most recent scholarly account of Bunker Hill and immediately preceding events.

[23] *Gage Corr.*, I, 405–407.

ade of the colonies by sea.[24] It is altogether likely that he expected an order for his own recall would promptly follow the receipt of his reports.

[24] *Ibid.*, II, 685–87.

CHAPTER XVI

Recall

ALTHOUGH GAGE remained in Boston for almost four months after Bunker Hill, he never was able to send home good news of any importance. As a matter of fact, the weeks and months following the battle were anxious and unhappy ones for the general. They were brought to an end by his removal from command. Had it not been for the ignominy attached to the removal, he might actually have received his dismissal from the service in America with considerable satisfaction.

To be sure, more redcoats reached Boston soon after Bunker Hill, the four regiments originally destined for New York arriving between June 22 and July 19. Gage's army thereby gained about 1,500 men, but he still felt it unwise to attempt a general offensive. Because of the casualties sustained in the battle and because of everyday losses through disease and accidents, Gage's forces were actually not much stronger after the battle than they were before it. Nor was there any prospect of further large-scale reinforcements before winter. Moreover, the defense of Charlestown Peninsula, entrusted to Howe, brought added responsibilities in the way of garrison duty. Meanwhile the American army had lost little, if any, strength, for the relatively light American casualties of June 17 had had no real effect. Indeed, Bunker Hill, after the initial shock had passed,

was rightly considered by the besieging Americans as virtually a victory. Besides, the American army was soon encouraged and unified by the coming of George Washington, who reached Cambridge on July 1 and who assumed control of the besiegers the next day in his capacity as commander in chief by appointment of the Second Continental Congress. In view of these circumstances Gage remained convinced that it was most unwise to try to break out into the interior of Massachusetts. He knew all too well that such an enterprise, even if successful, would cost dearly. He continued to believe that such an enterprise would inevitably be fruitless, since he could not hold Boston and its vicinity and at the same time take the offensive in the interior. In addition, he could discern no advantage to be gained from marching through the New England countryside.

No doubt Gage was wise not to attempt the aggressive from Boston. However, in adopting a defensive policy at that place as he did, he made one mistake which would later prove most embarrassing to the British. He continued to hold his opinion of June 23 that Dorchester Heights could not be used effectively against his troops. He therefore made no effort to move against them.[1] The major generals evidently agreed that Gage's decision was the right one. Certainly Howe, Gage's successor in command at Boston, took no action in regard to them.[2] Why Gage and the major generals concluded that Dorchester Heights were relatively unimportant is not entirely clear. They probably calculated that American possession of the heights would mean little unless Washington had the use of strong artillery and that Washington did not have and would not have the necessary heavy cannon. Besides, Gage seems to have believed, probably on the basis of reports from his engineers, that his own artillery could effectively command the heights in case of need.[3] It can

[1] For Gage's analysis of the Boston military situation after Bunker Hill see *Gage Corr.*, I, 409, 413, 418–19.

[2] Possibly Howe did not move because of instructions left behind by Gage. Brymner, *Report on Canadian Archives, 1889*, 129.

[3] The Kemble Papers, *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1883*, 44.

hardly be said that the decision reached by the British generals was a bad one. After all, Washington was not able to procure the cannon for many months and then only after almost incredible efforts on the part of American artillerists and workmen, who by hook and by crook dragged in heavy artillery all the way from Ticonderoga. Certainly, when Washington prepared to cannonade Boston from Dorchester Heights, the British quickly decided that Boston was an impossible place in which to live and made their exit.

After Bunker Hill Gage was more than ever convinced that New York was the proper base from which to begin the task of re-establishing British power in America. Howe and Clinton and almost everyone with any knowledge of strategy were of the same opinion. There was therefore much discussion by Gage and the major generals in August of a plan to abandon Boston and to move into New York. However, Gage thought that sufficient shipping was not available to move quickly, especially since hundreds of the Loyalists in Boston could not be left behind to their fate. Clinton proposed that the army be moved to New York after the Loyalists had been carried to Halifax, where they would probably be safe. But it was doubtful that sufficient men and supplies, particularly the latter, were available for a descent upon New York. In addition, Gage considered it to be improper to make such a major strategic decision, involving as it did prestige and politics, without permission from the cabinet. Gage therefore decided before August 20 to wait for instructions from Dartmouth and to make secret preparations in the meantime to carry out the plan. Permission to execute it, because a letter from Dartmouth was greatly delayed in transit, did not reach him until October 4. Eight days earlier Gage had received orders recalling him to England. It therefore fell to Howe to carry out the plan. Before leaving for home Gage suggested that it would be best to wait until spring to execute it, since he believed that the army could stay safely in Boston during the winter. Additional ships, supplies, and many more troops

would then be available. Howe's opinion coincided with that of Gage, and he remained there until he was forced out in the following March.[4]

There was very little fighting about Boston during the last few months of Gage's command. Gage allowed Clinton, who yearned to make a name for himself, to stage one sortie toward the American center, but would not permit other similar enterprises. On the other hand, Washington did not venture an attack upon the British. Washington did not hold back because of any tenderness for his old friend. He was much occupied with organizing and supplying his forces, and he overestimated Gage's strength by almost 100 per cent. Of course, the entrenchments built by Gage made an infantry attack a most perilous enterprise. In fact, the British generals hoped that Washington would be rash enough to assail their works, since the result would almost inevitably have been a disaster for the American cause. Washington undoubtedly displayed great prudence by refraining from battle waged on British terms.

With the commanders avoiding the aggressive there was much fortifying on both sides for a major clash that never came. The occasional firing in which the opposing armies indulged was hardly more injurious than the famous exchange of letters between Gage and Washington regarding the treatment of prisoners. Washington had grounds for complaint in that Gage refused to recognize American ranks and treated American officers in the same fashion as their men. Although Washington charged that the British abused their prisoners, it would appear that Gage was not responsible for any mistreatment which may have occurred. It is amusing that Gage would deal only with "*Mr.* Washington." We may readily pardon him for refusing the title of general to his ancient comrade.

If Gage was unhappy because of the seeming impossibility of achieving success on the field of battle, he was certainly sadly

[4] *Gage Corr.*, I, 410, 413–14, 419, II, 199–206; French, *First Year of the American Revolution*, 331–34, 530–31.

embarrassed by a serious supply problem. This problem, an awkward one almost from the first day of the siege, became progressively worse as time passed. Provisions could be obtained only by sea, and time would be required to draw effectively upon Britain. Fresh meat and fodder had to be obtained in America in any case. After Bunker Hill, fresh meat was exceeding scarce in Boston and was reserved for the wounded. Gage hit upon all sorts of devices to remedy the situation. One device, which helped greatly for a time, was to arrange matters so that Loyalist merchants in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and other ports shipped provisions to Boston under clearances for other destinations. Another arranged for the "capture" of supply ships belonging to friendly merchants by Admiral Graves's fleet. The most effective was Gage's use of the transports which had brought troops to Boston. These, which were under Gage's command rather than the admiral's, Gage armed and sent out to Halifax, New London, and other ports. They often returned loaded. Sheep obtained in this way proved to be invaluable in maintaining an adequate diet for the troops and Loyalists in Boston. Gage apparently did not worry greatly about the lot of the unfortunate patriots confined to the town.

In spite of the great efforts of Gage, who did not receive as much help in this regard as might have been expected from Graves, the food situation in Boston grew worse. According to a tradition which seems to have no foundation in fact, even the town bull, an aged animal, was turned into steaks and roasts. Philip Freneau, the American poet, has described the situation in lines supposedly uttered by Gage which have more fact than poetry:

> Three weeks, ye gods! nay, three long years it seems
> Since *roast beef* I have touched, except in dreams.
> In sleep, choice dishes to my view repair;
> Waking, I gape, and champ the empty air.
> Say, is it just that I, who rule these bands,
> Should live on husks, like rakes in foreign lands?

Come, let us plan some project ere we sleep,
And drink destruction to the rebel sheep.
On neighboring isles uncounted cattle stray;
Fat beeves and swine—an ill-defended prey—
These are fit 'visions for my noonday dish;
These, if my soldiers act as I could wish,
In one short week would glad your maws and mine;
On mutton we will sup—on roast beef dine.

Although sufficient food was obtained, it proved impossible to maintain a well-balanced diet. Salted meat became an excuse, if one were needed, for cursing in Boston.

Dietary deficiencies coupled with close quarters inevitably produced suffering and disease. Sickness, the heavy casualties at Bunker Hill, and a rather discouraging military outlook weakened the morale of the troops, who naturally laid their woes at Gage's door. Gage became a most unpopular man among his own soldiers, largely, it seems fair to say, through no fault on his part. Certainly he hardly deserved the enmity of one, Alexander Fowler, who openly displayed sympathy for the American cause. He was disciplined by Gage, and afterward actually tried to sue the general for damages in England. Nor were the dismal effects of an ugly state of affairs confined to relations between Gage and his men. Despite the ambitions and pretensions of the three major generals—ambitions and pretensions not so easily realized while Gage occupied the supreme command—there were no serious quarrels between them and him. However, a controversy between Gage and Admiral Graves eventually assumed rather large proportions. Graves was a bully and a bit of a grafter and was notoriously incompetent for high office in the navy. He had risen to power through the patronage of the Earl of Sandwich, himself a corrupt politician, who was then in control of the admiralty; and he was maintained in his post only because Sandwich would not consent to his dismissal. From the very beginning of their association the general and the admiral were on less than cordial terms, if for no other reason than that Graves had once had a sharp quarrel with Gage's father. Un-

fortunately, Graves transferred his dislike of the father to the son.[5] As things stood at Boston, the two men were bound to have difficulties regarding their respective spheres of command, and their subordinates took sides with their respective leaders. Even so, no great commotion would have been created except for the fact that both men very humanly wished to avoid censure for the continuing lack of achievement of the British forces in Boston. Relations therefore became more and more strained. Gage said no word officially against Graves, but Burgoyne attacked him savagely. There was a little snubbing on both sides and even a social rivalry between Mrs. Graves and Mrs. Gage before the latter left Boston. Without attempting to decide upon the merits of this controversy, one finds it rather significant that a nephew of Graves on the spot, who probably had no reason to hate his uncle, tended to lay the blame for it upon the admiral.[6] In any case, Graves was glad when Gage was recalled. However, the ax also fell upon him within a few months.

It was on September 26 that Gage received orders to return as promptly as possible to London. Behind those orders there was a story which has never been adequately told, indeed a story which will probably never be completely known. To follow it we must put ourselves in London on May 29, 1775, when a newspaper carried an authentic account of the Battle of Lexington and Concord based upon data sent across the Atlantic by the Massachusetts Provincial Congress in the specially chartered ship *Quero,* commanded by Captain John Derby. This account, which was an extremely partisan one, pieced together descriptions in the *Essex Gazette* and dozens of affidavits sworn to by various patriots, and was so filled with remarks concerning the aggressiveness and the cruelty of the British soldiers that some were at first inclined to reject it as completely false. Neverthe-

[5] Roberts (ed.), *Calendar of Home Office Papers 1773–1775,* 446. Graves did not condemn Gage utterly. He said that Gage "has sense, and writes well; understands the detail duty of an army, and I think would make an exceeding good governor at any other period. Now activity and spirit is required more than cold caution."

[6] *Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission,* Fourteenth Report, Appendix, Part X, 357.

less, there could be no real doubt that fighting, certainly not unexpected, had taken place. George III correctly concluded that "the dye is cast." Others, even Lord North, might quail at the prospect, but the king was not dissatisfied. Lord Gage was thrown into anxiety for his brother, which continued until Gage's report on the events of April 19 arrived on June 10. Gage's data on the conflict, less partisan than the documents emanating from the patriots, had been placed on board ship on April 22. The Americans, however, had outwitted him by sending the *Quero* in ballast. Starting four days later, Captain Derby had reached London twelve days before Gage's messenger. Thus the Americans gave a more effective version in the way of propaganda, and they gave it first.

Even before Gage's report on the results of his attempt to execute Dartmouth's "Secret" instructions of January 27 reached London, Dr. Arthur Lee, agent of the Massachusetts assembly at the imperial capital, was said to be predicting that Gage would soon be back in England.[7] On June 16 or 17 Lord George Germain, the man who was cashiered for misconduct on the battlefield of Minden and who was in the process of worming his way into the cabinet, took up the cudgel against Gage. Germain was all for using extreme force against the Americans. He informed the Earl of Suffolk, who was already a member of the cabinet and who was also bitterly against concessions to the Americans, that Gage's job was too big for him; that the American commander in chief must be prepared to act upon his own discretion, while Gage would merely execute orders; and that Gage's men had no faith in him. He argued that the general, despite his many good qualities, should therefore be removed.[8] Although no evidence pointing in that direction has been found, we may conjecture that some of those who had previously criticized Gage's inaction after August, 1774, continued or renewed their complaints.

[7] Hutchinson (ed.), *Diary and Letters of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson* I, 465.

[8] Germain to Suffolk, [June 16 or 17, 1775], Sackville-Germain MSS., III, William L. Clements Library.

In any case, when Gage's letters of June 12 and June 25 telling the news of Bunker Hill and urging again the sending of large forces to America were brought to London, public feeling reached a feverous pitch. There was mourning for the heavy losses sustained, there was humbled pride, and there was anger. There was also a very strong desire to place blame somewhere. Some person or some persons must be responsible for the tragic course of events in America. In these sentiments the king and and his ministers undoubtedly shared. But they could not find any shortcomings in themselves. Very humanly they sought for defects in others, and they easily found them in Gage and Graves. Here was Gage telling them of a barren victory, asserting that nothing more could be accomplished in America without additional troops, and implying that the major reason for his lack of achievement in Boston was the failure of his superiors to heed his warnings and to send him sufficient forces for a desperate struggle. Gage, candidate for scapegoat, was placing the responsibility for the disastrous occurrences in America squarely upon their shoulders. How vexing must his reports have been, especially since he was placing the responsibility exactly where it belonged.[9] Under the circumstances his dismissal from the American command was almost inevitable.

It is not remarkable that Gage was removed as commander in chief, but it is remarkable that the decision to replace him was taken within three days after the tidings of Bunker Hill reached the imperial capital. Before the end of July a commission giving Howe the command of the troops south of Canada was signed.[10] Gage's superiors did not even allow sufficient time to elapse so that they could claim to have found him guilty of incompetence at Bunker Hill. The haste with which they acted proves that the battle was the occasion rather than the cause of

[9] In a "private" letter of September 28, 1775, to Barrington (in the Gage MSS.), written after receiving notice of his dismissal, Gage unequivocally loaded the responsibility for the war and its evil fortunes upon the home government.

[10] Fortescue (ed.), *The Correspondence of George the Third,* III, 236–37; copy of Howe's commission, Gage MSS.

his dismissal. The same haste indicates that he had powerful enemies in London. And indeed such was the case. The motive force which brought about his prompt disgrace came from Scottish politicians led by Wedderburn and Lord Mansfield.

Why the Scottish clique in London was so violently opposed to Gage is not clear. It can be guessed that they were against him merely because he was English; that James Murray and George Johnstone, uncle and nephew, both of whom had some influence, still hated him for personal and family reasons; and that Wedderburn found a sadistic pleasure in striking down a helpless man. Whatever their reasons, there can be no doubt of their activities and little doubt that Wedderburn and Mansfield led them. Although no historian has hitherto referred to their activities at this critical juncture, Horace Walpole mentions them as if they were well known in London at the time.[11] Ralph Izard, a South Carolinian, who happened to be in the city and who had had some little acquaintance with Gage in New York, describes the intrigues of the Scottish politicians and points to Lord Mansfield as their champion. Izard, whose sympathies were with the American cause and who had no special reason to love Gage, wrote to Dr. Arthur Lee: "The Scotch, I find, have been indefatigable in their exertions against General Gage. They have, as usual, carried their point, and he is, it seems, to be superseded by Sir Jeffrey. The same art has been employed against him, that Mr. [Charles] Yorke so fatally experienced, and the same *serpent* [Mansfield] was the agent."[12] Izard also relates that Gage was not "sanguinary"

[11] Horace Walpole, *Journal of the Reign of King George the Third from the Year 1771 to 1783*, 2 vols. (London, 1859), I, 497.

[12] Izard to Lee, Aug. 21, 1775, *Correspondence of Mr. Ralph Izard of South Carolina, from the Year 1774 to 1804, with a Short Memoir* (New York, 1844), 118. Mansfield, a Scot and a Murray, was strongly for coercing the Americans. That he had a part in ruining Yorke cannot be proved. However, he urged Yorke to accept the lord chancellorship in January, 1770. Yorke's promotion was accompanied by political machinations which unnerved him and which are believed to have hastened his death. He died, perhaps a suicide, before he could take office. It is therefore clear that Izard referred to Mansfield. This conclusion is buttressed by the fact that Mansfield had reason to hold a grudge against Gage. The general had dealt sternly

enough to please the Scots, and thus offers additional proof that the real reasons for his recall were his caution, his refusal to accept the burden of making the final decision regarding America, and his insistence that force, if used, should be employed upon an overwhelming scale. But we need not rely upon Walpole and Izard for our knowledge of the Scottish cabal, for there is still in existence a letter from Wedderburn to North, written late in July, in which Wedderburn had the hardihood to blame Gage and Graves, particularly Gage, for the "present bad posture of affairs in America" and to demand the removal of both men.[13] Actually, the role of Wedderburn in bringing on the British-American conflict was no slight one. Surely he must also carry part of the responsibility for British unpreparedness for that conflict. One wonders how much of the hostility aroused among Americans against the English because of the American Revolution properly should have been directed against the Scots.[14]

Much can be said against George III, that "stuffy old drone from a German hive," who was by no means old in 1775. Yet George was a benevolent man as compared to Wedderburn: When he had earlier contemplated removing Gage, he had planned to do the job tactfully. When the dismissal was actually carried through, the king again insisted that the general's feelings be hurt no more than necessary, that, as one observer put it, Gage be "let down easy." On the very day the decision to recall him was taken the king spoke of a "reward" for him. The order to Gage depriving him of his powers therefore did not take

with Mansfield's client and reputed son, Thomas Mills. See p. 77 of this work; *Gage Corr.*, II, 429–30, 447–48; Ralph S. Walker (ed.), *James Beattie's London Diary, 1773* (Aberdeen University Studies, No. 122, Aberdeen, 1946), 132.

[13] *Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Tenth Report, Appendix, Part VI, 9.

[14] It is an interesting fact that Gabriel Christie, a Scottish officer, talked freely against Gage in the spring of 1775 to Thomas Hutchinson. Christie was reputed to be a favorite of Germain. When Germain wanted Guy Carleton to appoint Christie to a good job in Canada, Carleton refused. One can guess that Christie had been a supporter of James Murray in Canada, and that English Carleton would do nothing to aid a friend of Scottish Murray.

the form of a brutally direct discharge. Instead, on August 2 Dartmouth wrote him a letter instructing him to return to London to help lay plans for major operations in 1776, since no more could be accomplished in America during 1775. While he was on leave of absence in England, Guy Carleton would command in Canada and Howe would assume control over the remaining British forces. Through this ingenious device Gage was enabled to leave America without losing "face" completely. The device had another advantage: it gave government more time to consider what should finally be done for or to the general.

On September 26, H.M.S. *Scarborough* reached Boston Harbor, and Gage learned his fate. Without complaining of ill treatment he promptly made his preparations for departure. He turned over the necessary papers to Howe, gave such instructions as he thought wise, packed his own papers in solid white-pine boxes, and made ready for the public ceremony at which he would formally hand over his authority to Howe. On October 10, when all was ready, Gage received his last salute as commander in chief, and Howe received his first one. Everyone knew that the end had come for Gage, but all could pretend that he would return to America in the spring. It was no doubt easier that way. In the morning of the following day, Wednesday, October 11, he made his way to the seashore, where he said his adieus to Kemble. At nine o'clock at night his ship, the transport *Pallas*, set sail. With Gage went Thomas Flucker, secretary of Massachusetts. The general's departure was unostentatious, and his arrival in England was equally without fanfare. He reached London on November 14, and he was accorded an interview the next day by George III, who undoubtedly was kind.

But if George III played the gentleman at this interview, the malicious and the vengeful among his own people gloated over Gage's misfortune and the unthinking poured forth their criticisms. For a time he was certainly most unhappy. William Phillips, an artillery captain, wrote to General Henry Clinton

from Bath early in 1776: "Gage poor wretch is scarcely thought of, he is below contempt—no party thinks of him and he breaths a private man unthought of—." [15] Horace Walpole was able to joke about hanging Gage for the deficiencies of his masters. To be sure, none could match the viciousness of Charles Lee. "[Gage] has now run his race of glory . . . damn him! let him alone to the hell of his own conscience and the infamy which must inevitably attend him!" [16] Thoughtful and discerning folk, however, did not join in the chorus of condemnation. On the very day Gage turned over his command to Howe at Boston, Governor Wentworth of New Hampshire, a sober and respectable man who knew what was going on, hurried off a letter defending Gage to the Marquess of Rockingham, a leader in the Whig opposition. Wentworth, who could gain in no way by such an action, boldly declared that Gage was "a good and wise man . . . surrounded with difficulties." [17] Nor would George Selwyn, he of the cutting wit, undertake to exercise his talent upon Gage. Rather Selwyn asserted that he would say no word against Gage and that faults, if any were to be found, must be laid at the door of the king and the cabinet.[18] Nor were Wentworth and Selwyn alone in their defense of Gage, for those Whigs in Parliament who were in opposition to George III and his cabinet, as was to be expected, came forward to exonerate Gage. In the House of Commons the fiery Colonel Isaac Barré insisted that Gage was "a good officer, but a plain man" and that he was forced to let Burgoyne issue silly and high-flown pronunciamentos because of pressure from London. Charles James Fox, in the same body, ridiculed government officials for prating about firmness in 1774 and for sending out meager forces to enforce their will. He severely rebuked members of the cabinet for trying to shift the blame for the disastrous course of events in America from their own shoulders to those of the gen-

[15] Phillips to Clinton, Jan. —, 1776, Sir Henry Clinton MSS.

[16] The Lee Papers, *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1871*, 211.

[17] Roberts (ed.), *Calendar of Home Office Papers, 1773–1775*, 441.

[18] *Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Fifteenth Report, Appendix, Part V, 284.

GENERAL THOMAS GAGE, DATE UNCERTAIN

From a painting by Richard Wilson in the collection of Henry L. Shattuck of Boston. Reproduced by permission.

eral. In milder language the Duke of Richmond took the same tack in the House of Lords.[19] Under the circumstances, the ministers did not dare publicly to accuse Gage of beginning the war on his own initiative. Dartmouth did suggest meanly in a private letter to William Franklin that the commander in chief might have avoided hostilities.[20] It was reserved for American historians of a later time to assert openly that he sent out his troops without orders from home.

No doubt Gage found some consolation in the opinions and sympathy of men like Barré, Fox, and Richmond, although he did not allow himself to be attracted into the Whig opposition. Assuredly he found happiness in his reunion with his family. In a touching letter to Clinton of January, 1776, he hints that he has at least one advantage over his fellow officer: he is surrounded by his children, while Clinton is exiled from his.[21] For a time Gage undoubtedly was buoyed up by the hope that he would be given a new post which would ease the shock of his dismissal. Not long after his return to England, it was proposed that he be given a new commission as commander in chief, with the understanding that he would remain in England and would have no real authority over Howe and Carleton. According to a statement made by the Duke of Richmond in the House of Lords—and Richmond was probably well informed—such a commission was actually drawn up and then quickly set aside.[22] In any case, the project came to nothing. Then Barrington, who

[19] William Cobbett, *Parliamentary History of England, 1774–1777*, XVIII, 768, 770, 1194–95. Gibbon, the historian, wrote on August 14, 1775: "Gage is recalled. Good men rejoice. Patriots [the Whig opposition] murmur." Rowland Prothero (ed.), *Private Letters of Edward Gibbon (1753–1794) . . .*, 2 vols. (London, 1896), I, 266.

[20] Regarding Dartmouth's ungenerous attitude see "Why the March to Concord?" *American Historical Review*, XLIX (1944), 454n.

[21] Gage to Clinton, Jan. 3, 1776, Sir Henry Clinton MSS. (Clinton had not yet met Mrs Baddeley, who would later be his mistress and who would help him to forget his troubles as commander in chief at New York.)

[22] Cobbett, *Parliamentary History of England, 1774–1777*, XVIII, 1194–95. Gage did receive a new commission as commander in chief when he was recalled in 1775. The reason for the change was that his commission of 1764 provided that the senior officer in America would serve in his absence. This provision was deleted from the commission of 1775 so that Howe and Carleton could operate independently of each other. See *Gage Corr.*, II, 303.

was eager to do what he could for his old friend, suggested to the king, in January, 1776, that he be given the important command of Gibraltar.[23] But this scheme, too, fell to the ground. Possibly Gage refused the appointment. More likely, it was not offered to him. Had he assumed the post, he might well have added greatly to his military reputation by successfully defending the "Rock" against the Spanish and French, as did General George Elliot in the famous siege that began in 1780. His patience and his dogged courage might have retrieved at Gibraltar the laurels dropped in America, as Lord Cornwallis' exploits in India compensated for his failure at Yorktown. However, he was destined never to serve again on the field of battle. The decision regarding his status was postponed until April, 1776, when it could be no longer delayed. On April 18 Lord George Germain, newly chosen secretary of state for the colonies, sent to the general a curt letter announcing that his powers as commander in chief were revoked in favor of Howe and Carleton. The blow was only slightly softened with the information that he was to continue in office indefinitely as governor of Massachusetts, drawing his salary in that capacity as before.[24] The "reward" for "the mild general" contemplated by George III was not forthcoming.

[23] Fortescue (ed.), *The Correspondence of George the Third*, III, 333.

[24] *Gage Corr.*, II, 206–207.

CHAPTER XVII

Ends and Judgments

FOR A TIME after his return to England General Gage lived with his family in Park Place in London, but he soon purchased a house in Portland Place in which he resided during the last eleven years of his life. Because of the loss of his pay and perquisites as commander in chief he probably could not afford a country home. He was not, however, seriously embarrassed in a financial way during the period. Living prudently, he was able to arrange for the education of his children in good and expensive schools [1] and to offer them suitable allowances as they reached maturity. He was also able to make at least one visit to Bath. Nor were he and his family forbidden the pleasures of life in a country house, for they were always welcome guests at Firle. Indeed, the general brought other guests to Firle, including Frederick Haldimand and Thomas Hutchinson, the latter spending several days there on more than one occasion.

It might be inferred from what has been said above that Gage's domestic affairs continued to run a happy course, but such was apparently not the case. Although the union of Thomas and Margaret Gage had once been a model of conjugal happiness, a cloud seems to have been cast upon it by 1781. In that year *Town and Country Magazine*, a London publication which

[1] In 1777 Gage accompanied his son Henry to Göttingen, where Henry was entered as a student in the university.

in its time fulfilled some of the functions carried on by Walter Winchell in the twentieth century, carried a scandalous sketch which portrayed "The Lenient Commander" as an intimate of a very attractive young lady. "The Lenient Commander" was, of course, Gage, and the sketch suggested that he, like so many British aristocrats in the eighteenth century, kept a mistress who worked in a millinery shop. To be sure, he may have been the innocent victim of a gossip sheet, and he may have had an interest other than amorous in the lady. However, the magazine printed portraits of both Gage and Mrs. F——G and told in some detail how Mrs. F——G, a clergyman's daughter, was seduced by Lord B—— at the age of seventeen, how she resolved to use her attractions to live at the expense of her male admirers, and how she successfully campaigned to win the attentions of the general.[2]

At all events, whether or not the accusation was well founded, the general and Mrs. Gage continued to live together *en famille* in Portland Place, and Stephen Kemble continued to look upon his brother-in-law as his best friend. Certainly the Gage children do not appear to have suffered greatly because of difficulties in relations between their parents. Two of these have been lost in obscurity, probably because they died in childhood. The others caused no scandal and seem to have done very well in the world. Three daughters married into well-known families. John, the second surviving son, espoused a niece of the Marquess of Rockingham. William Hall, the youngest son, chose a naval career, rose to the rank of admiral of the fleet, was knighted, and served as a lord of the admiralty. Henry, after the death of his uncle in 1791, became the third Viscount Gage in the Irish peerage and the second Baron Gage in the British peerage.[3] These titles have passed through the general's de-

[2] "Histories of the Téte-à-Téte annexed; or, Manners of the Lenient Commander and Mrs. F——G." *loc. cit.*, 234–36.

[3] Retiring from the House of Commons in 1780, the second Viscount Gage accepted a British peerage as Baron Gage of Firle. This title could not pass to any but a son. In 1790 he therefore sought and obtained a second

scendants to the present day. Henry inherited wealth not only from his father and his uncle, but also through his wife, granddaughter of Sir Peter Warren of Louisbourg fame. He was probably one of the wealthiest peers in Britain.[4]

Although Gage's fall in public esteem in 1775 was a precipitous one, he did not lose all his old friends, for he and his wife maintained their former intimacy with the Amhersts, the James Robertsons, and Frederick Haldimand. They also resumed their associations with those Americans who had sought safety in England because their affection for Britain had made it impossible for them to remain in their homes. Thomas Hutchinson, of whom both the general and his brother were fond, was constantly in Gage's company until Hutchinson's death in 1780. Hutchinson's famous diary tells a sad story, for it is studded with references to social gatherings where he met Gage, Lieutenant Governor Oliver, Thomas Flucker, George Leonard, and Sir William Pepperell of Massachusetts, Governor John Wentworth of New Hampshire, and other Loyalists. The diary indicates that these gentlemen frequently engaged in talk about America, and that their talk was by no means gay. One can imagine the dropping of their spirits as days, months, and years passed, and a British victory became ever more unlikely. Most of these Loyalists were, like Hutchinson, to die in exile.

Gage's interest in American affairs continued to be intense, perhaps almost as great as that of his American Tory friends. In private company, Hutchinson tells us, he criticized Lord George Germain and John Pownall for the manner in which they conducted the war. Although he was seldom employed in a military capacity until 1781, his interest in American problems may have been larger than that of the idle bystander, for he had at least one interview with George III regarding Howe's campaigns. Early in 1777 he brought to the king a letter from Stephen Kemble, which presumably contained information of impor-

British patent as Baron Gage of Highmeadow, with reversion to his brother's sons. Elizabeth Gage's death occurred eight years before that of her husband.

[4] *Gentleman's Magazine*, LXI, Part II (1791), 974.

tance to His Majesty. He could have exerted some little influence in this interview and in others which may have occurred. In 1778 Gage served with Loudoun, Amherst, Monckton, and others on a court of inquiry which investigated Burgoyne's disastrous Saratoga campaign and which gave an open verdict permitting Burgoyne to continue in active service.

Until the close of the War of Independence Gage had at least one faithful friend in America, for Stephen Kemble remained in the service after Gage's departure for England and corresponded with the general. As deputy adjutant general under Howe and Clinton he was not happy. His services were not valued by Gage's successors. Gage and Sir Sampson Gideon, and no doubt the second Viscount Gage, did what they could to secure promotions for him, and he was given a lieutenant colonelcy in the sixtieth regiment in 1778. But his prospects remained dubious. The adjutant general's department included the army secret service. In 1779, after receiving overtures from Benedict Arnold, Clinton was eager to place the unfortunate John André in charge of that department. Clinton persuaded Lord Rawdon, the adjutant general, to resign, and arranged a deal whereby André took over Kemble's post. In exchange André undertook to pay Kemble £300 a year for stepping aside. André, then only a captain, did not lose financially, since he received an automatic promotion to major. Kemble was accordingly ordered to his regiment.[5] Afterward, when André was hanged as a spy, he must have congratulated himself because the negotiations with Arnold had been entrusted to his successor rather than to himself. He served with the sixtieth regiment in the West Indies and Nicaragua toward the end of the War of Independence and was made a colonel in 1782, no doubt in part through Gage's assistance. In 1793 he was appointed deputy judge advocate. However, his military career really ended with

[5] Carl Van Doren, *Secret History of the American Revolution* (New York, 1941), 233. It is possible that criticism of Clinton by Kemble may have encouraged Clinton to push the exchange. Winthrop Sargent, *The Life of Major John André* . . . (New York, 1871), 222–23.

the close of the war, since his brother-in-law was unable to help him further. He was employed by Gage, and, after the general's death, by Mrs. Gage to watch over the family property in the colony of New Brunswick, New York, and the West Indies. Finally, in 1805, when he was no longer young, he returned to his childhood home in New Jersey. There, like other members of the Kemble family, he eventually cast his lot with the new republic. In the end his heart was on the western side of the Atlantic. He died in New Jersey on December 20, 1822, a very old man.[6]

As long as Lord George Germain held office as secretary of state for the colonies Gage, like Kemble, could hardly hope for advancement in the army, certainly not for an American command. But the good will of the king and the high opinion of Gage held by Jeffrey Amherst eventually brought him back into active service. In the midst of the War of Independence Amherst accepted a post as commander in chief of the British army, with the special duty of protecting the British Isles from invasion. After France, thanks in part to the efforts of the ingenious Benjamin Franklin, allied herself with the Americans in 1778, the possibility of a French attempt at invasion again existed. When Captain John Paul Jones made a raid into the North Sea and captured the *Serapis*, genuine alarm arose in London. Amherst therefore began to raise and drill English militia for home defense. Inevitably Gage's ability in training men brought him once more to the fore. Apparently Amherst and the king agreed that Gage should be given a place on the former's staff, and that he should be entrusted with the defense of the county of Kent, for such an offer was made to him on April 13, 1781, and was promptly accepted as a mark of favor from both Amherst and the king.[7] The appointment was the more welcome to Gage in that Amherst was famous for his constant refusals to employ or to advance persons out of mere friendship. From June to Decem-

[6] For Kemble's later career see The Kemble Papers, *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1883, . . . 1884, passim.*

[7] Fortescue (ed.), *The Correspondence of George the Third*, V, 221.

ber in 1781 Gage was stationed at Coxheath and was reasonably busy in helping to train the militia.[8] It soon turned out, however, that fears of an attack by the French were really baseless. Consequently the general and his colleagues at Coxheath had a relatively easy time of it, and the militia mixed jollity with work. Finally the decision was made to disband it, and he was again without important military occupation.

The news of Yorktown was undoubtedly sad news to Gage, but the stunning victory of the Americans and their ally, France, brought the downfall of his enemies in the cabinet. Yorktown drove Lord Germain from power and led to the resignation of Lord North. With Germain and his friends and Lord North and his friends removed from the regions about the throne, obstacles to Gage's further preferment were largely removed. On November 20, 1782, he was made a full general. He might possibly have secured additional honors in the way of a knighthood or a title, but there was no particular reason to grant him such favors.

With the close of the War of Independence the armed forces were steadily reduced and Gage was seldom busy in a military capacity after 1783. After the war, however, he frequently gave testimony in support of the claims of Loyalists who sought and secured compensation from the British government for the losses which they sustained because of the war and punitive laws passed by American legislatures. He also gave proof of the treason of Dr. Benjamin Church so that the latter's widow could more effectively ask assistance from government. But his career had really ended in 1775, and his life was drawing toward its end. Shortly after the end of hostilities his health began to fail as the result of "an inflammation of the bowels." In the summer of 1786, probably aware that his death was not far distant, he drew up his final will. During the following winter Haldimand noted that his old comrade grew thinner and weaker every day. In February, 1787, Gage was asked to accept a nasty job as presi-

[8] Correspondence between Gage and Amherst for this period is preserved in the Amherst Papers, War Office 34, Bundles 134–38, 236–39. It is almost entirely devoted to military details.

dent of a court-martial to try Major General Charles Ross on a charge of disrespect to a superior officer, but he begged off because of his physical condition. Indeed his race was nearly run. At length, after much suffering, he died in his home in Portland Place on April 2, 1787. A few days later his body was carried to Sussex and buried at Firle with his ancestors.[9] There is no inscription upon his tomb.

The general's will, of which his widow and his brother were executors, gives no information that would permit a close estimate of the value of his estate. The property which he left was apparently not magnificent. He arranged for a fairly even distribution of his property among his surviving children, with a considerable part of it placed in trust for his widow during her life. As administrators of this trust Gage chose his faithful friends William Shirreff and Samuel Kemble, and Sir Sampson Gideon. Modest and sensible to the end, he requested that his funeral be conducted with frugality.[10]

[9] On Gage's last years see Correspondence of George the Third, typescript, William L. Clements Library, Vol. II, 648; The Kemble Papers, *Collections of the New-York Historical Society for the Year 1883*, 240; and McIlwraith, *Sir Frederick Haldimand*, Chapter XVI. His death was announced in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, LVII, Part 1 (1787), 366, and the *European Magazine*, XI (1787), 296. In a diary kept by Haldimand and used by Miss McIlwraith, printed in Brymner, *Report on Canadian Archives, 1889*, 123–299, Gage's death is recorded as of June 2. However, for some reason unknown to this writer, the dates in that diary are extremely unreliable. The date given in the text is unquestionably accurate for it appears in the magazines cited and in newspapers of the time, and is recorded upon the official copy of his will.

[10] Gage's will is preserved in Somerset House. The present Viscount Gage graciously obtained a photostatic copy for the writer. One interesting provision refers to the 18,000 acres of land "in the province of New York" which the general had acquired in 1769. Curiously enough, these lands had not been declared forfeited by the state of New York. Perhaps Mrs. Gage's relatives exercised their influence to save them from seizure. Possibly Gage's personal popularity in New York also helped to protect his interests. More likely, Gage executed a legal maneuver which prevented confiscation, for Jacob Lally, "mariner," conveyed the property to Peter Kemble in March, 1788. Lally was owner in name only during the War of Independence, holding the lands for Gage. The property, located in what is now Oneida County, was sold by the general's eldest son in 1794 to Peter Kemble, probably a son of Samuel Kemble, for approximately £2,000. Daniel E. Wager (ed.), *Our County and its People: A Descriptive Work on Oneida County, New York* (Boston, 1896), 106–107.

Mrs. Margaret Gage lived on for many years in the house on Portland Place. After almost thirty-seven years of widowhood she died on February 9, 1824, at the ripe age of ninety.[11]

A generation later her youngest son, the admiral, then himself advanced in years, presented a portrait of his father painted by John Singleton Copley to General William Sumner, a Bostonian and a connection of the Gages by marriage. General Sumner gave the painting to the state of Massachusetts. Much of the rancor which characterized the War of Independence had vanished. At length the portrait of the last royal governor of Massachusetts took its place in the State House at Boston beside those of the other gentlemen who had served as chief executive. Its presence there in the country which was Gage's second home is entirely fitting and is also an indication that thoughtful people in the Bay State no longer remember Gage as a vicious tyrant. It is now time for Americans generally to recognize that he did his best according to his lights and also that a firm belief in the righteousness of the American cause in the War of Independence need not be accompanied by a contention that those who opposed it were utterly odious.

If it be admitted that Gage was an honorable man, a question still remains: was he fitted for the high offices he held? Since nothing fails so ignominiously as failure, it could easily be argued that he was downright incompetent. Nevertheless, when his career in America is carefully weighed, it is hardly possible to deny that Gage was a good and faithful servant of the British Empire and that his country was guilty of ingratitude. It was his hard lot simultaneously to be abused by his American enemies and to be deserted by his compatriots.

As a military man, to be sure, Thomas Gage had faults. He lacked the audacity of Wolfe; he never won the complete confidence of his men, as did Amherst; modest to a fault, he was not a born leader. He was probably not a great commander in the field. His management of the campaign of 1759 on Lake Ontario,

[11] *Gentleman's Magazine,* XCIV, Part I (1824), 380.

of the expedition to Concord, of the Battle of Bunker Hill, and of the defense of Boston hardly proved him to be a genius. On the other hand, given the conditions under which he labored, it cannot be said that he lacked merit in the field. If he was not a master of the arts of battle, neither was he guilty of truly major blunders. It is probably just to characterize him as a competent field commander, at least by European standards. There is every reason to believe that he was a good administrator and that he did all that could be done to expel corrupt practices from the army in America. He was also an excellent drillmaster and disciplinarian. There was never any question of his personal courage. Had he remained in office as commander in chief throughout the War of Independence, the British army would not have achieved less than it did. His successors in the supreme command, Howe and Clinton, won few laurels. Howe was almost incredibly sluggish; Clinton, possibly in large part out of necessity, was never very active. Certainly Gage was a more competent general than the bombastic and careless Burgoyne. Because he was modest, decent, and just, and because he had many family connections and friends in New York, he was better suited for the supreme command in America in terms of personality than any other available high army officer. Had he continued in office as commander in chief, it is fairly likely that his personal popularity, his devotion to duty, and his prudence would have brought at least as much success as Howe achieved in 1776 and 1777. But he was not given an opportunity to take the field with a chance for glory.

On the whole, Gage exhibited greater talents as a politician than he did as a general. He favored, it is true, those measures taken by the British government which were the immediate causes of the final rupture between Britain and America. He approved of the Stamp Tax, and regretted that no attempt was made to enforce it. He had no quarrel with the Townshend Acts, and he was sorry that government tried only halfheartedly to execute them. He suggested that Parliament require the

American colonies to provide for the quartering of British troops, and he did his best to make the quartering laws passed by Parliament effective. He likewise desired to strengthen British authority in America by destroying the proprietary governments and by depriving the New England colonists of the control which they exercised over the executive branch of government. He also wished to wipe out the democratic system of town government in New England and to put in its place the English corporation system. He did what he could to prevent emigration beyond the Alleghenies. He was ready, if necessary, to use military force to defend what he considered the rights of crown and Parliament in America. His views regarding the relationship between Britain and the colonies were the traditional views of the European administrator toward colonial questions.

On the other hand, Gage had no wish that Britain should play the tyrant. He wanted liberty and law, as he understood those terms, respected by all. Nor was he so thoroughly wedded to his own ideas of the proper relationship between Britain and America that he insisted upon their acceptance. He took no major action upon his own initiative in America toward implementing his ideas, and he would do no more than give his advice to his superiors when requested on the course which Britain should follow. It was the task of government to make decisions; his duty was to recommend, and more particularly to enforce. Given his background, his advice was shrewdly practical. He wanted Britain to assert her claims firmly and sternly at the onset of the crisis in Anglo-American affairs. As an alternative—a less desirable course—he argued that she should give in gracefully to the demands of the Americans. Above all, Britain should be consistent in her conduct. He condemned, rightly, the vacillation of British policy between coercion and conciliation during the years 1765–74. It is significant that he did not rule out as utterly undesirable a policy calling for the uniform appeasement of American demands.

To be sure, Gage can be criticized for not undertaking to

champion the idea of an empire based on the principle of equality between the British citizen in Britain and the British citizen in America. However, few of his countrymen in his time discerned the justice of such an arrangement. There were also few who saw that the Mother Country, by abandoning political control over the colonies, could actually strengthen the loyalty of the colonists to the Mother Country. The wise philosopher Dr. Benjamin Franklin was able to envisage a noble empire based on parity between the British at home and the British beyond seas. But even so great a man as William Pitt was convinced that sovereignty over colonies could not be abandoned without abandoning the colonies themselves. It would be unjust to heap coals upon the head of Gage because he did not possess vision beyond the leading men of his country in his own time.

Certainly Gage had every right to be proud of his record as governor in Massachusetts before the outbreak of hostilities. He lost favor with his superiors because of his caution, his mildness, his unwillingness to precipitate an armed conflict without orders, his suggestion that the British government suspend the Coercive Acts and temporize until his forces had been enlarged, and his insistence that a war between the Mother Country and the colonies would be hard-fought and long continued. Conversely, because of his attempts to enforce those acts and his military preparations, he seemed a tyrant to many Americans. Nevertheless, one must praise him for the essential decency of his behavior. Nor can one censure him for his refusal to begin hostilities upon his own responsibility. Again, the event proved him utterly right in his advice to London that an American war would be no trifling and brief affair.[12] Some writers have im-

[12] That Gage eventually came to believe that independence was for some years before 1775 the goal of Massachusetts patriot leaders (see *Gage Corr.*, I, 421–22) does not prove him guilty of bad judgment. It was almost inevitable that he should interpret the actions of Samuel Adams and his colleagues in that way, once war had begun. He was probably mistaken regarding their aims. Nevertheless, it can be argued with some cogency that Adams desired independence as early as 1768.

plied that he was guilty of a fault in not negotiating with the patriot leaders. However, it should be recalled that he had no legal power to make any substantial concessions, even if the Massachusetts people had paid for the Tea Party, which they did not do. Moreover, he displayed a constant willingness to receive proposals from the American leaders and to forward them to England. He even urged that the cabinet ask the Americans to send commissioners to London to talk over the Anglo-American problem. He might have made himself temporarily popular in Massachusetts by suspending the Coercive Acts and by recommending to the king and the cabinet that concessions be made to the Americans. Would it have done any good? It seems highly doubtful that he could have changed either the views of the stubborn men in power in London or the attitude of the equally stubborn patriot leaders. He stood between antagonistic forces, whose clash he could not avert. The hurricane which resulted he could not stay, although he could and did postpone it for many months. In the wreckage left behind by the hurricane was his own career.

Bibliographical Note

It has not been considered necessary or particularly helpful to prepare a formal bibliography for this book or to make a fetish of documentation. However, citations have been offered in support of statements containing facts not presented in earlier works and for statements containing new interpretations and disputable points. Much material in this volume was taken from authoritative writings by Claude H. Van Tyne, Herbert Osgood, Charles M. Andrews, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Allen French, and many other distinguished scholars too numerous to name. It has not been believed indispensable to mention each and all of these writings. Where citations have been offered, they are sufficiently precise to permit scholars to locate the volume or document cited. Works and collections of documents have been described rather fully when first cited. Thereafter, for convenience, abbreviations have been employed.

Although, as has been stated, it has not been believed worth while to prepare a formal bibliography, a brief description of the Gage documents, from which this work is largely derived, may have some value to the reader particularly interested in some phase of Gage's activities. It is not pretended, however, that this description covers every scrap of paper emanating from Thomas Gage. Rather it is intended to deal with the papers of at least minor, as well as major, importance available to the student.

Gage manuscripts are preserved in many libraries and archival depositories. The largest collection, and the basic one, is that of the General Thomas Gage Manuscripts, in the William L. Clements Library of the University of Michigan. This collection, which is almost exclusively public in character, contains many thousands of documents, a considerable portion of which is unobtainable else-

where. The major part of it consists of the general's correspondence during the period 1763–75, when Gage was commander in chief in North America. Almost every phase of American history from the Peace of Paris of 1763 until after the Battle of Bunker Hill is at least touched upon in this collection. It also embraces the extensive official correspondence of the general during the latter part of the French and Indian War, including the documents covering the period of his service as military governor of Montreal, 1760–63. It is especially valuable because the general carefully preserved both incoming letters and accurate copies of outgoing letters. By all appearances, a very large part of his official correspondence as commander in chief is accessible in the William L. Clements Library.

An important part of the commander in chief's official correspondence, that between Gage and London officials, is also preserved, in the forms of originals and office copies, in the British Public Record Office. His correspondence with the secretaries of state for the southern department and for the colonies is filed in Colonial Office, Series 5; with the secretaries at war in War Office, Series 1; and with the treasury in Treasury 1. The Admiralty papers include a few Gage items. Most of these London records may likewise be found in the form of transcripts in the Library of Congress, and a part of them are available in the Bancroft transcripts in the New York Public Library. Copies of a part of the military commander's official correspondence with London are to be found in the Shelburne Manuscripts in the William L. Clements Library.

One Gage letter of the year 1778 and a manuscript volume containing a small part of the official correspondence of the commander in chief with Sir William Johnson, General John Bradstreet, and others are located in the Harvard College Library. Transcripts of the papers in this volume are also to be found in the Library of Congress. They are duplicated in the Gage Manuscripts. Also duplicated among these papers are portions of the commander in chief's correspondence with Sir William Johnson and of his correspondence with the governors of the Old Thirteen Colonies, which are kept in the appropriate state archival depositories and state historical societies. Many official letters exchanged between Gage and the governors, however, are to be found only in manuscript form in the William L. Clements Library. The letters exchanged between Gage and Haldimand are preserved in the Haldimand Manuscripts in the British Museum, transcripts of which are available in the Public Archives of Canada. Transcripts of a part of these papers are also accessible in the Library of Congress.

The Haldimand Manuscripts include a few items of Gage-Haldimand correspondence not found at Ann Arbor. Gage's correspondence with Henry Bouquet is preserved in both the Bouquet Manuscripts in the British Museum and in the William L. Clements Library. A few letters exchanged between Gage and Washington in the period after Braddock's defeat and during the siege of Boston are in the Washington Papers, Library of Congress.

Gage's correspondence with Amherst during the years 1758–63 and for the period 1781–82 is contained in the Amherst Papers, War Office, Series 34, in the Public Record Office. That for the period 1758–63 is duplicated in the Gage collection and partly duplicated in the Amherst Manuscripts in the William L. Clements Library; but the letters and papers of 1781–82, largely concerned with routine military matters, are obtainable only in the Amherst Papers. A few Gage items arising from his service under the Earl of Loudoun are preserved in the Loudoun Manuscripts in the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery. A few others of no particular importance are in the Emmet Collection and in the Miscellaneous Papers of the New York Public Library. One letter from him to Horatio Gates is to be found in the Gates Manuscripts in the New-York Historical Society. The John Watts Papers in the same institution include a few Gage items. Two memorials of the years 1755 and 1756 (?), respectively, addressed by Gage to William Shirley are in War Office, Series 1; one letter from him to Sir Henry Clinton is preserved in the Sir Henry Clinton Papers, William L. Clements Library; and a memorial to the Board of Trade requesting his New York land grant is in Colonial Office, Series 5. His regimental and general orders covering the period 1759–77 are in the British Museum Additional Manuscripts.

Unofficial Gage items are, alas, relatively scarce. However, a number of valuable letters and papers have been saved in the family home at Firle in Sussex. These include letters from Gage to his oldest son and important documents concerning his military accounts, also one of the year 1773 giving him the key to the city of New York. Particularly valuable has been the correspondence of Gage, the second Viscount Gage, and the Duke of Newcastle, 1742–64, in the British Museum, especially the Newcastle Papers. Three Gage letters to Robert Monckton, of 1764, 1765, and 1768, are located in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Maine Historical Society, and the Massachusetts Historical Society respectively. The first-named organization also has an interesting letter to Robert Hunter Morris of February, 1756. Three informative letters to Viscount Townshend of

1768–69 could be found only in Maggs Bros. Catalogue No. 597 (Summer, 1934); another to Lord Rollo, dated 1763, is preserved at Dundrub Castle in Scotland, but a search failed to bring it to light. At least a few other scattered Gage items have eluded the writer. Gage's will is filed at Somerset House.

Of course, a good share of the Gage documents has appeared in print. A small part was published during his lifetime, including a few letters to Lord Hillsborough, correspondence with Washington during the siege of Boston, and his well-known letter of 1774 to Peyton Randolph, president of the First Continental Congress. Many of the collections of colonial and Revolutionary documents put forth by the states and historical organizations of the Atlantic seaboard contain Gage papers, especially those of local interest. Gage-Bouquet correspondence is printed in Sylvester K. Stevens, *et. al.* (eds.), *The Papers of Col. Henry Bouquet* (mimeograph, Harrisburg, 1940–42). Some of Gage's letters to Washington are readily available in Stanislaus M. Hamilton's *Letters to Washington and Accompanying Papers* (Boston and New York, 1898–1902), and his correspondence with Sir William Johnson may be examined in *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, edited by James Sullivan *et al.* (Albany, 1921—). Many Gage documents dealing with the trans-Allegheny West are to be found in the *Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library*, Vols. X, XI, and XVI, entitled respectively *The Critical Period, 1763–1765*, *The New Régime, 1765–1767*, and *Trade and Politics, 1767–1769* (Springfield, Ill., 1915, 1916, 1921). Two very important letters of the early years of the French and Indian War are printed in Thomas Keppel's *The Life of Augustus Viscount Keppel, Admiral of the White, and First Lord of the Admiralty in 1782–3* (London, 1842), and another of the period of that war can be found in Thomas Balch's *Letters and Papers Relating Chiefly to the Provincial History of Pennsylvania* . . . (Philadelphia, 1855). A most important letter from the general to Thomas Hutchinson describing the famous session of the privy council in the Cockpit Tavern is published in Peter O. Hutchinson's *The Diary and Letters of His Excellency Thomas Hutchinson* . . . (Boston, 1884–86); another to Hutchinson of great value, of the year 1774, appears in *Royal Historical Manuscripts Commission*, Fourteenth Report, Appendix, Part X. In the *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Fourth Series, Vol. IV, there is a significant document containing his replies to questions by George Chalmers regarding the beginning of the War of Independence. A few routine letters and papers relating to the Illinois country, 1766–69,

are printed in "Some Letters and Papers of Gen. Thomas Gage," *The John P. Branch Historical Papers of Randolph-Macon College,* Vol. IV; Randolph G. Adams has also presented a number of Gage writings dealing with the Boston Massacre in *New Light on the Boston Massacre* (Worcester, 1938); and Arthur G. Doughty's *Report on Canadian Archives, 1918* gives the decrees issued by Gage as military governor of Montreal, 1760–63.

By far the largest and most useful printed collection containing Gage documents is that of *The Correspondence of General Thomas Gage with the Secretaries of State, and with the War Office and the Treasury, 1763–1775* (New Haven, 1931–33), edited by Clarence E. Carter. The two volumes include the great bulk of the general's reports sent to London and also the letters to him from the secretaries of state. Professor Carter has done his usual competent job of editing, and the present writer has chosen, for the convenience of scholars, to cite his compilation when possible rather than the manuscript sources upon which it is based.

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